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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

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Oakland's Water War

Pat Brown's Political Odyssey

Shanghaiing on the Barbary Coast

Los Angeles Boosters Promote Paradise

A 19th-Century Woman Climbs Mt. Whitney





## California Snapshots



ABOVE: Calling a snowball ceasefire, two young Sonorans enjoy a slushy winter day in 1900 doing what children have done for centuries when frozen ammunition stockpiles on the ground. Perhaps Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic—also formulated to fight malaria—awaited them at the conclusion of their cold war. CHS, San Francisco

COVER: The Sweet Sisters staunchly pose for the cameraman on a granite slab in the snowy Sierra in 1896 wearing modern mountaineering gear: fitted muttonleg-sleeve jackets, roomy woolen bloomers, and gaiters.  
—Shirley Sargent Collection



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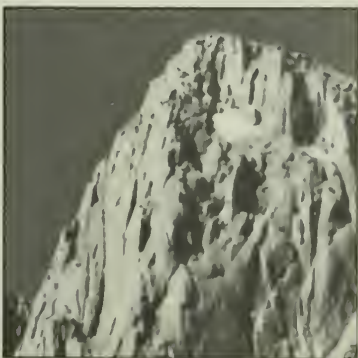
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# THE POLITICAL ODYSSEY OF PAT BROWN



When Edmund G. Brown filed his papers to campaign for California attorney general in 1946, even close friends and political allies had difficulty taking him seriously. The popular San Francisco district attorney had made a name for himself by cracking down on card rooms, brothels, and abortionists. But there was one major drawback to his decision to campaign against Republican Fred Howser. Brown was a Democrat challenging the administration of one of California's most popular Republican governors, Earl Warren.

Since the turn of the century, there had been only one Democratic governor in the state, Culbert Olson. Republican domination of Sacramento's constitutional offices, including the attorney general's post, made it difficult to persuade viable Democratic candidates to run for these positions. Now it looked as if Pat Brown, who campaigned in the gladhanding Irish manner, was setting himself up for defeat.

While Brown lost the campaign, students of California politics noticed an interesting fact about Howser. Wherever he appeared during the fall of 1946, the Republican candidate never shared a rostrum with Warren. The governor was leary of this Los Angeles district attorney believed to be a protégé of the state's number one lobbyist, Artie Samish. In the months following their inauguration, Warren took further steps to distance himself from Howser. One of the governor's first moves was to establish a Commission on Organized Crime independent of the new attorney general's office.<sup>1</sup>

No one understood the political implications of this rift better than Pat Brown. In 1949, winged by accusations that he took money from a Los Angeles bookmaker during the 1946 campaign, Howser decided not to file for reelection. His replacement on the 1950 Republican ticket, Ed Shattuck, made the fatal mistake of calling Warren a regal, power-hungry kingmaker.

Warren responded by giving his blessing to Brown's second attorney general campaign. Suddenly bill-

boards across California began carrying the names of the Republican and Democratic candidates side by side.<sup>2</sup> In November Pat Brown became the sole Democratic candidate for statewide office to survive the Republican landslide.

In just four years Pat Brown made such a name for himself as attorney general that he crossfiled for reelection and won the 1954 Democratic and Republican primaries. This triumph aside, Pat Brown might have never ascended to the state's highest office were it not for the political suicide of a man who should have known better. That benefactor was Senator William F. Knowland. To advance his presidential aspirations, the *Oakland Tribune* publisher decided to come home in 1958 and run for governor. His only stumbling block was that California already had a Republican governor, Goodwin Knight, who wanted another term. Against all reason Knowland bulldozed a switch that resulted in Knight running for the publisher's U.S. Senate seat. This cynical move destroyed both Republican politicians and helped elect Pat Brown in 1958.<sup>3</sup>





Who was this Democrat who took the oath of office in January 1959? The third-generation son of Irish and German immigrants who traveled to California during the gold rush, the young Brown was raised in modest circumstances. His father, Edmund Joseph, toyed with the laundry business, the film business, and photo studios but was best known for his cigar store. He also ran card parlors in later life. The boy's mother, Ida Schuckman, had moved to San Francisco from the family farm in Colusa County. Although Brown and his siblings went to Catholic grammar schools, their Unitarian mother made sure they attended every major church and synagogue in town. Through this process Pat, his brothers, and sister learned to look at God from differing points of view. It was an important lesson in flexibility, one that would serve him well in his future effort to manage an eclectic state.<sup>5</sup>

Although the family had limited finances, the energetic Brown was

able to work his way through night law school by clerking for a blind attorney during the day. In 1927, Brown passed the bar, and within a year he filed papers for the state assembly race on the Republican ticket. Soundly beaten, the young practitioner returned to private practice. In 1929, he married Bernice Layne, daughter of a crime-busting San Francisco police captain. While Brown's law practice flourished, a colleague, attorney Matthew Tobriner, challenged Brown's Republican bias. Two years into Roosevelt's New Deal, Brown announced a change of heart: he would join the Democratic party.<sup>6</sup> Whatever good this decision may have done for his conscience, it had no immediate impact on his political aspirations. His 1939 campaign against incumbent San Francisco district attorney Matt Brady was a disaster. It wasn't until 1943 that Pat finally won Brady's seat in a rematch.

The Democrat's victory came on the strength of a "Crack Down On Crime, Elect Brown This Time" campaign. It was a page straight out of the textbook written by Oakland district attorney Earl Warren. No vice

was too small, no scam too petty, to escape Pat's ire. In a Bohemian town like San Francisco, with a long tradition of *laissez-faire* police enforcement, there were plenty of numbers runners, hookers, and abortionists for Brown to lock up.<sup>7</sup>

While the anti-crime plank continued to be a key part of the Brown platform during his attorney general days, the San Franciscan was also allying closely with the liberal thinkers of the California Democratic Council (CDC). Formed in 1953, the CDC's goal was to break the state's Republican stranglehold on the electorate.<sup>8</sup>

Thanks to cross-filing (which allowed voters to cast ballots in both the Republican and Democratic primaries) Republican Warren had captured both the Democratic and Republican nominations for governor in 1946. In response, the CDC dreamed of organizing clubs that would make sure only Democrats won the nomination of their party. As the sole Democrat holding statewide office, Brown was the CDC's Irish Catholic father figure. He did not disappoint this liberal constituency.

(Overleaf) Edmund G. Brown campaigned up and down the state with the style of a traditional people's politician.

(Right) Brown (center), shown here in 1961 with environmentalist and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas (left) and Interior Secretary Stewart Udall (right), after inspecting the proposed national seashore at Point Reyes, considered himself "an environmentalist, but also a builder."

(Far right top) Donning a straw hat, Brown beat the drum for the band of the University of California, an institution whose growth he nurtured.

(Far right bottom) Brown, shown here talking to newsmen in 1960, regretted only one major decision in his first tenure as governor—his refusal to commute the death sentence for Caryl Chessman.



An activist attorney general, Brown persuaded the U.S. Supreme Court in 1958 to reverse a lower court decision in the *Ivanhoe* case. This landmark decision upheld a 1902 policy limiting the sale of federal reclamation project water to farms of 160 acres or less. The decision was a major blow to big agricultural growers who owned holdings exceeding the 160-acre limit.<sup>9</sup>

Part of Brown's political appeal was his sometimes unintentional ability to make light of the day's issues. Making the case that it was far cheaper to parole young offenders than put them in expensive state institutions like Ventura School for Girls, he once asked an audience: "Do you know how much it costs to keep a woman in Ventura?"<sup>10</sup>

As an activist attorney general, Brown also fought to realize vast

state royalties from offshore oil drilling, recovered charitable trusts foolishly invested in race tracks, and uncovered lumber overloading on trucks in Mendocino County. He also exposed mistreatment of state mental hospital patients, sued *Confidential* and *Whisper* magazines for publishing objectionable materials, prosecuted Yolo County policemen who staged lascivious stage shows, worked to keep California teenagers away from Tijuana vice, and raided gambling parlors and bordellos from Pismo Beach to Eureka.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of Brown's second term, he had become the state's ranking Democrat. With the CDC organization setting up a grassroots network, his party could now count on support from local clubs statewide. And party leaders believed he was the logical Democratic candidate for governor. At first, incumbent Goodwin Knight looked difficult to beat. But in the fall of 1957, when Bill Knowland bulldozed his way into the Republican gubernatorial candidacy, Brown was handed the political opportunity of a lifetime. On October 30, the attorney general launched the winning

campaign which led him to the governorship a year later.

As governor, Brown lived by a simple creed. California had great needs in areas such as transportation, education, social welfare, and recreation. All of them, he believed, could be financed by raising taxes on personal incomes, cigarettes, beer, corporations, banks, petroleum, rights to natural gas extraction, and inheritances. "We are a rich state," he insisted, "and we can pay for it."<sup>12</sup> Brown challenged "the people of California to become involved with the big problems of their state, to care personally and deeply about them, and to pay the taxes to help solve them." Nowhere was this policy more evident than in his vigorous year-long campaign for the California Water Plan, a joint state and federal undertaking to transport Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta water to Southern California.

Criss-crossing the state, often working the boondocks late at night,

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Brown was a latterday missionary determined to unite north and south with a 500-mile-long aqueduct. The economic significance of this \$12 billion plan was obvious to the farmers, the developers, and the industries who stood to benefit from importation of Northern California water. No longer dependent on the Colorado River and the Owens Valley watershed, these residents would be free to tap the state's most abundant water supply.

But for Brown the Water Plan issue also symbolized his own gubernatorial ambitions—to unify this sprawling state, to have Californians put aside their partisan differences and work together for the good of one another. The north, he believed, would contribute its riparian assets and the booming south would return prosperity to all golden state citizens.

Brown's personal campaign for the water plan illustrated an optimistic, some might call it naive, faith in the healing virtues of the political process. Although opponents like Paul Taylor, the late University of California economist, called the plan ill-conceived, financially unsound,

and a blatant misappropriation of the state's water resources, Brown begged to differ.<sup>13</sup>

He was particularly sensitive to accusations that the water plan was a sell-out to the agribusiness interests he had bested a few years earlier in the Ivanhoe case. The fact was, explained the governor, that anyone from the smallest dirt farmer to the largest agribusiness could buy water from the new project. But to further the spirit of the old 160-acre limitation which he had defended as attorney general, Brown worked out a deal that favored the family farmer. Owners of properties under 160 acres would pay a lower rate for project water than those with farms above that threshold.

This was classic Brown political diplomacy, and it characterized his

determination to "give the small farmer a break in his battle to compete with the big mechanized farms."<sup>14</sup> He also saw the project as a way to advance the state's environmental and economic needs: "I'm an environmentalist but I'm also a builder; I love to see projects."<sup>15</sup>

Even Brown's executive secretary, Fred Dutton, who worried that the project would cost so much "that we'll drown all the school children and all the universities in the state," was brushed aside. "The hell with it," replied Brown. "We can have both. We're a rich state."<sup>16</sup>

It was an optimistic view of California's future, one that the electorate shared. In November 1960, the water plan passed, and the following fall Brown went to Oroville to trigger a historic blast. From the



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dam-site observation point, the governor boasted that this new state water project would "correct an accident of people and geography."

The fact that Brown thought this historic rift between north and south was correctable said much about his view of the political process. When critics accused him of using the water plan as a way to sew up the Southern California vote in the 1962 campaign, he replied: "You have to believe me when I tell you that I only had the welfare of all the people of California at heart during the water plan campaign. I didn't do it for political gain."<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, during much of his first term Brown's legislative record was distinctly nonpartisan. A master plan for higher education, freeway construction program, substantial increases in the public school fund, tougher crime laws, reorganization of state departments, and the ending of election primary cross-filing all became law.

The Brown administration took an activist approach to many pressing problems of the fast-growing state. Among others, Brown backed bills to equip cars with smog control de-

vices, provide medical treatment for drug addicts, construct mass transit facilities, protect San Francisco Bay from excessive landfill, and capture 80 percent of tidelands oil revenues for the state. Nearly all of Brown's proposals to raise taxes were approved. And during his first two years in office the Democrat lost on only two major issues: the abolition of capital punishment and a \$1.25 minimum wage for workers exempt from federal coverage.

While the California Democratic Council was disappointed by these defeats, there was no doubt that the governor's astonishing series of legislative triumphs had rebuilt the credibility of his party. In less than ten years Pat Brown had taken his fellow Democrats out of the political wilderness and shaped them into a legislative streamroller. And while Brown may have drifted a bit to the right of the CDC majority, the fact remained that he had a good record on civil rights, fair housing, equal employment opportunity, and programs designed to assist the needy.

During that first term, Brown made only one major decision he would come to regret. Called on to

commute the death sentence of "Red Light Bandit" Caryl Chessman, Brown first granted a sixty-day reprieve in January 1960. That decision rankled many constituents, including those who booed him at the opening of the Squaw Valley Winter Olympics in February 1960. In May, with Chessman once again set to die, pleas for a last-minute stay poured in again from such diverse petitioners as Dr. Albert Schweitzer and Brown's son Jerry. This time Brown said no, and the convict went to the gas chamber.

Brown, who became a foe of capital punishment after leaving politics, confessed years later that if he'd had his way, he'd "have commuted him from capital punishment to life. After I gassed thirty-three of those poor bastards and was out of office, the Supreme Court decided they should not have been killed. Of course, it was *ex post facto*."<sup>18</sup>

Although Brown's vacillation on the Chessman case led to some kidding (such as the joke that the famed prisoner walked in and out of the gas chamber so many times they had to re-pave death row), the Democrat's first-term record was a good





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one. The state's booming economy gave his campaign for a second term an important boost. Although his opponent, former vice-president Richard Nixon, tried to imply that the incumbent was soft on Communism, that sales pitch flopped at the polls. A dozen years before Nixon would shoot himself in the foot over Watergate, Brown enjoyed the thrill of being the only politician ever to defeat Nixon.

**B**rown began his second term in 1963 with the same kind of confidence that had once buoyed Earl Warren. People in Sacramento were already talking about a third term for this Democrat who had humiliated Nixon and demonstrated remarkable legislative artistry.

Brown's brilliant staff was a not-so-secret weapon in his campaign to boost unemployment and workers' compensation benefits, create a consumer counsel's office, adopt a master plan for higher education, and build three new medical schools and

a half-dozen state colleges. Preble Stolz, a member of Brown's first legislative staff, found his boss had a "genius for inspiring loyalty. He was a good-government type who was interested in doing the right thing."<sup>19</sup> This heartfelt sentiment was repeated over and over again by aides who spoke of the governor in almost worshipful terms.

Yet by the end of his sixth year in office, it was clear that Brown's era of good feeling was beginning to wane. The first major sign came at an unlikely site, the University of California at Berkeley, the alma mater of his wife Bernice, brother Frank, and son Jerry. State support of education was a cornerstone of Governor Brown's personal political philosophy. He was determined that California become the first state where "a young man or woman who has the ability can go from kindergarten through graduate school without paying one cent in tuition."

While he supported the university 100 percent, Brown also believed in those well-known companions, law and order. Like love and marriage, they were inseparable. All through his days as district attorney, he had

(Far left) In 1964, when students began the Free Speech protest at the University of California, Brown ordered police to break up sit-ins, resulting in the jailing of hundreds of students including leader Jack Weinberg (in car) for trespassing.

During a university Board of Regents meeting, Theodore Meyer, Governor Brown, University President Clark Kerr and Chancellor Roger Heyns (from left) discuss the need for a strong hand in settling a student strike.

worked overtime to quell racketeering, vice, drug peddling, pornography, and graft. Throughout his political life, Brown had never backed off from prosecuting a legitimate case. It didn't matter if the defendants were assemblymen fraudulently reselling liquor licenses or policemen staging lascivious stage shows in Yolo County. He did not look lightly on his sworn duty to uphold the law.

But in Berkeley, his responsible liberalism met a great test. A committed civil libertarian who had lobbied for fair housing and fair employment legislation, Brown was not unsympathetic to the goals of Berkeley students seeking free speech on campus. But in December 1964, when the students occupied Sproul Hall, he decided that however admirable their political goals, they did not justify obstructionist means. On his orders police charged in, dragged out, and arrested hundreds of students.

"We cannot compromise with revolution, whether at the University or any other place," explained the governor.<sup>20</sup> While this rhetorical response represented his effort to calm



his conservative critics, it did not placate them. Like the Chessman case, the disruptive Free Speech Movement cast doubt on Brown's ability to enforce the law aggressively. But here the issue was a broader one than the morality of capital punishment. Critics saw the Free Speech Movement as mob rule and argued that the governor could have broken up the rebellion earlier with immediate intervention. Brown, who had built his political career defending law and order, was now being portrayed as a softie. Again in 1965, the Watts riots led Republican critics to suggest that the governor had lost his ability to manage the state.

While conservatives blamed these disturbances on Brown's permissiveness, old friends at the California Democratic Council were also drifting away. At the 1966 CDC convention, he persuaded delegates to oust their chosen leader, Si Casady, for criticizing President Lyndon Johnson's Vietnam policy. This struggle was not without cost to the governor, however, for it alienated many of his traditional supporters. Suddenly the great Democratic party unifier was being picketed by fellow Democrats carrying placards urging, "Upside Down with Brown."

Governor Brown seemed to be losing his sure touch for California politics. The same man who had been able to win Democratic and Republican nominations now had trouble controlling his own party. Worried about his chances for re-election, Brown supporters decided to try to undercut the leading candidate in the 1966 Republican gubernatorial primary, San Francisco mayor and dairy owner George Christopher.

They released to Washington columnist Drew Pearson a 25-year-old story about Christopher's technical arrest for breaking state laws regulating milk.<sup>21</sup> Publication of this story dampened Christopher's aspirations and helped nominate his Republican opponent, Ronald Reagan. Although Hollywood was certainly a cornerstone of California's imaginative life, Brown felt his opponent was hardly the stuff of political melodrama. Their gubernatorial campaign came off as a kind of playoff between FDR and the Marlboro Man.

In his passionate, often eloquent speeches, Brown spoke of his remarkable legislative record. No matter where you looked in the state, from farmlands to universities, to beaches, parks, business centers, and freeways, Brown had helped improve the quality of life. Minorities, who had been red-lined out of certain neighborhoods and denied employment because of race, now could count on state law to obtain their constitutional rights. New programs had been initiated to assist the mentally ill, the disabled, and the unemployed. State government had been streamlined, thanks to his reorganization. But Reagan countered that these legislative accomplishments were undercut by a frightening moral decay. Crime in the streets of Watts and on the Berkeley campus were, in Reagan's view, the direct result of permissiveness in Sacramento.

This cry of a politician demanding an end to lawlessness was not unfamiliar to Brown. His own career had been launched in the great western tradition of the new sheriff riding in to clean up the town. But now Brown was being portrayed as part of



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the soft underbelly of moral decay. Government, Reagan claimed, had rejected man's spirituality and personal freedom in favor of social engineering. Instead of letting every man tend to his own needs, the state was taxing him and then using the money to pay for what it deemed best for California's citizenry. The California social millenium that Brown spoke of in his speeches was, according to Reagan, coming unglued. Attacked by the left for being too conservative on issues like Vietnam and by the right for being too lenient toward crime in the streets, Brown looked more and more like a dated period piece.

In November 1966, Reagan, who promised to clean up the mess at the University of California, put down rebellion in Watts, cut taxes, and reduce the public sector, beat Brown by nearly 993,000 votes. "To be frank," he conceded after it was over, "a majority of Californians were bored with me."

**A**lthough the Democrat spoke from time to time of trying



*Republican Governor Earl Warren endorsed Democrat Brown's second attorney general campaign in 1954, giving a boost to Brown's career that took him to the governor's chair. Warren (left), photographed duck hunting with Brown in 1962 near Colusa, became U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice.*

to make a comeback in a senatorial campaign, it was his son Jerry who reclaimed Sacramento for the family eight years later. Moving to Beverly Hills with his wife, the elder Brown practiced law, raised money for Jerry's campaigns, spoke, and remained active in Democratic party and CDC politics. A fixture in many Democratic campaigns, he remained a popular stump speaker and a welcome sight at political rallies.

Although he never fully recovered from his final defeat by Reagan, Brown enjoyed his role as the father figure of California politics. No gubernatorial or presidential campaign in California was complete without several swings by the elder Brown. As a concession to age, he curtailed his 1982 campaigning for his son's senatorial bid to six days a week. At times slowing down seemed like a good idea. "I really should retire," conceded lawyer Brown in 1982. "But every once in awhile I get an interesting case."<sup>22</sup>

A lobbyist for such clients as American Trailways and Japanese banks, he also helped create the Edmund G. Brown Institute of Government Affairs in Beverly Hills for the study of public policy. This was

an appropriate forum for Brown to advance his own views of government. In his mind California was the ideal place for a politician to practice his art. Many of the accusations hurled at him by opponents—that he was a big spender, that he spent too much time trying to appease opposing sides, that he often shifted his viewpoint, that he believed government could and should bail out those who couldn't help themselves—were true. Philosophically Pat Brown remained optimistic about the ability of big government to do big things.

While his son and other politicians spoke of an era of limits, the elder Brown was dubious. His generation had pushed productivity to its outer limit, and the state that had become the nation's largest economic producer during his term of office couldn't turn back now. The California dream was only achievable to the extent that its citizenry was willing to pay for it.

Brown continued to preach this view wherever he went. Audiences across the state were eager to hear his message, and even in Beverly Hills exile, he remained one of the most fascinating stories in California

politics. His legislative accomplishments were many, and in an age of media hype and junk mail campaigning, his style was a delight. Personable, charming, funny, Brown remained very much the model of the old Irish pol. Perhaps what made him such a favorite was his loyalty to the people of California. Unlike his son, Reagan, Nixon, Cranston, Knowland, Warren and many other political leaders of his time, Brown had never made a serious effort to run for office beyond the boundaries of his native state.

Even those who disagreed with his vision for California never questioned his commitment to the state. As Brown himself once put it in a letter to his son: "People closest to me know that I really want to accomplish things and that I am not too much afraid of people I think are wrong." It was a philosophy worthy of the man who believed California was not a stepping stone but an end in itself.<sup>23</sup> □ (See page 73 for notes.)

*This article is one of a series made possible by a generous grant from Mrs. LeRoy F. Krusi in memory of her husband, a former California Historical Society trustee.*





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# SHANGHAIED!

The Systematic Kidnapping  
of Sailors  
in Early San Francisco

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*by Lance S. Davidson*

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ne of the blackest chapters in the history of San Francisco involved the nefarious practice of "shanghaiing." Shanghaiing—the kidnapping of sailors to man short-handed ships—flourished in the

latter half of the nineteenth century in San Francisco although it had debased merchant shipping in United States ports for more than a century. Along both coasts of the United States shanghaiing was common, but it was most prevalent in the Barbary Coast area of San Francisco's waterfront.

This flagrant violation of fundamental civil liberties was practiced without legal restraint for over a century. As members of a migratory class unable to vote for protective legislation, sailors formed a classic lost constituency in a democracy. Only after they organized as a group following the turn of the century did the laws of the United States accord them the full rights of other citizens, primarily by protecting seamen from shanghaiing and from the conditions giving rise to it.

In the late 1800s the calling of the merchant marine had fallen into disrepute. From what had been in colonial days America's "first and finest employ," seafarers became classed with criminals and prostitutes. Tremendous progress had been made in shipbuilding, with the construction of efficient and graceful China and California clippers and steam vessels, yet harsh punishment of sailors and intolerable living conditions aboard ship caused a severe scarcity of native Americans shipping out, despite the United States Congress' abolition of flogging in 1850. Mistreatment of sailors by ships' officers was sanctioned by the courts as appropriate for maintaining discipline at sea. Under federal statute from 1835 until 1898 and founded on the seminal case of *Butler v. McClellan* of 1806, brutal oppression, including beating, starvation, and imprisonment, was in effect authorized if the ship's master believed it reasonably justified.<sup>1</sup>

The sailors' quarters in a ship's forecabin ("fo'c's'le") offered little refuge. Located below the water-line, they were poorly ventilated and cramped, stinking of sweat-rotted clothing and urine, floors slick with spittle and tobacco juice. Malnourished from eating the cheapest grade of salted beef and weevil-infested sea biscuit and inadequately dressed in clothing often soaked with salt

*Migratory and unorganized, sailors like these men of the Derbyshire (photograph c. 1883) suffered extremely harsh living and employment conditions until protective legislation ended shanghaiing.*

spray, seamen fell sick with consumption and scurvy. The latter resulted from a common vitamin deficiency which caused rotten gums (from which teeth snapped out), easily bruised flesh, swollen joints, emaciation, hair loss, sores, and bleeding. The sailor's lot provoked a shocked surgeon in a U.S. Marine Hospital in 1874 to declare:

*No prison, certainly none of modern days, [is] so wretched but life within its walls is preferable, on the score of physical comfort, to the quarters and the life of the sailor on the vast majority of merchant vessels.<sup>2</sup>*

Finally, sailors were driven hard in order to compensate for the reduced efficiency resulting from their physical and mental degradation, as well as for the chronic shortage of hands on ships caused by captains who sought to reduce their overhead costs.

Finding it impossible to recruit enough competent American seamen in the open market—particularly during the Gold Rush when crews jumped ship in San Francisco—ship masters resorted to shanghaiing their crews. The derivation of the term "shanghaiing" may date to early sailing days when no ship sailed directly between Shanghai and San Francisco, and a voyager wishing to travel from one port to the other had to sail around the world to reach his destination. Hence a ship starting a long, hazardous voyage was said to be making a "Shanghai voyage," and the luckless sailor forcibly impressed into a vessel's crew was "shanghaied."

Throughout the nineteenth century, the specter of shanghaiing haunted every port and ship plying the high seas:

*The tales of the forecabin are replete with the names of iniquitous parasites who achieved international reputations as masters of the shanghaiing business. What sailor never heard of "Scar Face" Johnson, Paddy West, or "Shanghai" Brown?*

*The shanghaied victim is always either enticed on board under some mental delusion not to be realized, or else driven on board by some physical force not to be resisted. A dead body was once carried on board an outward-bound ship at the port of New York and deposited in a bunk in the forecabin under the pretense that it was a drunken sailor, and three months' advance was collected for the "stiff." On another occasion, a minister was enticed out to a ship in a small boat and shanghaied on the pretext that a dying man on board wanted the consolation of religion. As the unsuspecting dominic was clambering precariously up the rope ladder to the rail, the ship was already under way in the stream, and*





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## As early as 1852, twenty-three shanghaiing gangs operated on San Francisco's waterfront.

*the crimp shouted to the skipper from the stern sheets of the wherry, already dropping astern: "That's a good man goin' up now, Cap'n. Take good care o' im."*<sup>3</sup>

The "crimp," or shipping master, a man who made his living by furnishing ships with crews, enticed seamen by offering them a good time while in port. Often the crimp had one or more boarding houses which provided lodging and other services to a "Jack." In the boarding master's employ were "runners" whose principal duty was to bring seamen into the boarding house. A ship could remain anchored a mile from shore for several weeks before arriving alongside the wharves to discharge its cargo, and thus its crew members were trapped on ship unless runners picked them up. Most seamen who succumbed to the blows or enticements of the runners were taken immediately to boarding houses, although occasionally the crew of a newly-arrived foreign vessel was driven over the ship's side while stupefied with drugged liquor and carried aboard a seabound vessel without putting their feet on dry land.

The work of a runner normally ended once a sailor crossed the threshold of the boarding house; thereafter he was handled by the crimp or his retainers. The sailor's bag containing his few worldly possessions was taken as soon as he arrived. Directed to a bunk, he was plied with as much cheap liquor as he could drink. The standard concoction of whiskey, brandy, gin, and opium reportedly could knock a man out for days. A sailor might be robbed and hustled off to sea the very next morning aboard the first out-bound vessel, or instead have the dubious fortune to remain in the boardinghouse until his senses and hard-earned wages completely left him.

As early as 1852, twenty-three shanghaiing gangs

*Within the waterfront's myriad alleys and streets packed with saloons, brothels, and boardinghouses, countless traps awaited unwary seamen on shore leave. In this 1851 photograph, crewless ships crowd the San Francisco shoreline.*

*Originally warehouses built on pilings in the bay, many Barbary Coast establishments (photograph c. 1865) contained "dead-falls" through which shanghaiied sailors were shoved into row boats waiting below.*

*Lacking family and permanent homes, sailors frequented saloons and bordellos, spent their wages, and concluded their shore leave deeply in debt to saloon and boardinghouse operators.*

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operated on San Francisco's waterfront. On San Francisco Bay professional boatmen who rowed large skiffs, called Whitehall boats, taxied pilots, officers, and sailors to and from the anchored vessels. Whenever an incoming vessel was reported outside the Golden Gate, Whitehall boats could be seen streaming from the waterfront. The boatmen's best customers were runners, up to a half-dozen attached to each boarding-house. Competition for customers was fierce, for a runner received a commission for each sailor he enlisted to desert ship and accompany him to a boardinghouse:

*The [runners] swarm over the rail like pirates and virtually take possession of the deck. The crew are shoved into the runner's boats, and the vessel is often left in a perilous situation, with none to manage her, the sails unfurled, and she is liable to drift afoul of the shipping at anchor. In some cases, not a man has been left aboard in half an hour after the anchor has been dropped.*<sup>4</sup>

According to the runners' credo, any sailor was fair game until he was actually in a boat or he had named his crimp, whereupon he was disregarded by the other runners.

Not surprisingly, the waterfront along the eastern and northeastern fringes of the Barbary Coast was regarded as one of the city's most dangerous areas. In addition to the policeman's nightstick and pistol, officers assigned to waterfront duty sported a foot-long knife, notable for having been used by embattled police to chop off the hands of their assailants.

Within the waterfront's myriad alleys and streets packed with saloons, brothels, and boardinghouses, countless traps awaited unwary seamen on shore leave. Many establishments, originally warehouses built on wooden pilings extending into the bay, contained "dead-falls" through which shanghaiied sailors were shoved into rowboats waiting below.

Sailors often traveled from their shoreside quarters South of Market to the uptown dives and bagnios of the Barbary Coast for entertainment, especially after the *California Police Gazette* alerted the public to the "strychnine whiskey" used by the South of Market bars to snare their prey for the shanghaiing trade.<sup>5</sup> Pity the hapless sailor who awoke days later shanghaiied aboard an ocean-going vessel. An unusual second-hand account of being shanghaiied out of San Francisco around 1874-1876, suggesting some of its unexpected consequences, appears in a letter written about the seafaring father of William Davis:

# CESSPOOLS OF INDECENCY ON THE BARBARY COAST

Resorts Where the Most Degenerate Frequent and Hold High Revel.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM



**N**OT often in a big city do vice degeneracy and sin flourish within the shadows of a Hall of Justice. Close to the new municipal build-

ing on the corner of Kearny and Wash- ington streets are a number of the most vilest resorts the streets. They are un- most part, buried be- which cover but a in- exhibitions, the ab- decency and the s- that goes on in these by police interference.

This is the Barbary by men and women of in the social scale. of women who no longer place in the community of these dives. Some entertainment of such character that even the most patron drop into it.

But the show is not a Barbary Coast dives, variety, such as the re M. Bears, 1909, Kearny but a polished floor, sine nightly against a bar and a man behind a women who have made- reney for many years from the g life with ex- sistent exhibitions are



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM



## South of Market bars used "strychnine whiskey" to snare their prey.

*[He] left us [in Vallejo] to go to San Francisco to look for work around the water front and the sailors boarding houses and saloons and was drinking, so a ship was bound out for Europe and they were short of carpenters. So they shanghaied him drunk and loaded him on the ship and when he sobered up they were 6 days out on the ocean bound for Cape Horn as in those days there was no Panama Canal. So we were left and never knew where he was . . . Grandpa Davis shows up after 9 or more years . . . and told his story of his wanderings. How they shanghaied him, how the [vessel] was shipwrecked in the Bay of Biscay off the coast of Spain, how he was picked up by a ship bound for Malaga, Spain. How he sailed for England, then to Canada and to California looking for us, then to Logan and found us but Grandma would not take him in so he left . . . ."*

**A**mong the most brazen of the Barbary Coast crimps was Michael Connor. Famous in the early 1880s for his skill in furnishing complete crews at a moment's notice, Connor ran a saloon and boardinghouse in the Barbary Coast. When hundreds of crewless vessels were anchored in the bay in 1882, Connor instituted "blood money" tactics. He dispatched runners to round up available mariners and bring them to his saloon where they were plied with liquor and rowed out to waiting vessels. Probably the most notorious shanghai, John Devine, alias "The Shanghai Chicken," was hanged for the murder of August Kamp in 1873. Various credited with a dozen murders and seventy-nine arrests in six years, Devine, who lost his left hand in a Barbary Coast knife brawl in 1868, achieved further infamy from participating in a bare-knuckle 143-round prizefight at Point Isabel in 1864.<sup>7</sup>

Another arrant crimp, Shanghai Johnson, specialized in kidnapping whalers and suffered a fittingly watery fate: his body was found floating in the bay shortly after he had delivered an incapacitated seaman to a ship off Alcatraz Island. Throughout the 1860s the annual City Directory's weekly chronicle of events carried

entries such as: "The body of an unknown man was found floating near India Dock . . . ."<sup>8</sup>

Shanghaiing proved to be a very lucrative enterprise for the boardinghouse masters and saloonkeepers of the Barbary Coast. Some grossed as much as \$50,000 annually after paying their runners up to \$500 each week.<sup>9</sup> Many San Francisco political bosses were known to be in league with them, Boss Ruef and Chris Buckley, for instance, ensuring the non-enforcement of a municipal ordinance imposing a \$500 fine on anyone boarding a vessel without the captain's permission. As the *San Francisco Times* noted in 1861, "Certain interested parties" admonished shipmasters not to interfere with the bay's runners, else their ships would be denied crews when ready to sail. Means of harassment to obtain cooperation included fabricated charges of "trash on deck" and "throwing garbage overside," setting fires below deck, boring auger holes below waterline, and unshackling anchor cable.

Bold San Francisco crimps monopolized the local sailor market by organizing themselves into associations. They secured control of the seamen's employment future by virtue of laws which authorized the holding of a sailors' clothing and advance wages as collateral for debt. By rule of the Port of San Francisco, all seamen shipping through crimps were required to leave behind two months' pay. Departing sailors frequently had spent their earnings from the incoming voyage, and by an advance or allotment note, they mortgaged a large part of their outgoing wages to the crimps. By 1894, American sailors were reportedly signing away their wages in allotments at a rate of 15,503 notes per year,<sup>10</sup> only a handful of which (732) went to relatives.

If seamen happened to be unseasonably plentiful, crimps purchased from shipping masters the exclusive privilege of supplying crew. Because seamen were usually in scarce supply, however, only through the crimps could a shipping master obtain a crew for his ship, and then only after paying them the sailors' advance pay. This practice—known as "blood money" because men were frequently beaten senseless when shanghaied—was self-perpetuating. Instead of raising wages to seamen when they were in demand, blood money and shanghaiings, often of nonseaworthy landsmen, increased. The resulting harsh treatment aboard ship necessary to mold a crew drove even more good seamen away from the seas. That only ten percent of the typical

*Good San Francisco citizens decried Barbary Coast vice, but proved ineffective in combatting it.*

*Barbary Coast girls, some immodestly posing with unplaited hair, welcomed lonely sailors—and took their money.*





American vessel's crew around 1900 was American no doubt testifies to the squalor of sailor life.

Sailors were virtual slaves in perpetual poverty, laboring under subhuman conditions to work off debts attached to their future wages. Since they could not collect their wages, aside from two to four months' advance pay, until their ship completed its voyage, which lasted anywhere from four months to four years, and since sailors who failed to complete the voyage would forfeit the entire accrued amount, captains had a strong incentive to induce sailors to desert ship. Consequently, ships sometimes harboring for months in San Francisco Bay welcomed aboard runners who lured "deserting" sailors to shore. Seamen waiting on the bay usually deserted within a few days, making easy prey for the crimps with whom the captain had often made previous arrangements. Ironically, sailors would sometimes find themselves aboard the vessel they had just left, occasionally within hours, unable to collect wages earned from the previous voyage and indebted to crimps for two months' advance pay for the outgoing voyage.

Official attempts to improve the seamen's lot by controlling the crimping system, the heart of shanghaiing operations, were repeatedly unsuccessful. In 1872, for example, crimps successfully boycotted and paralyzed the industry when a Shipping Com-

*Ships harboring for months in San Francisco Bay welcomed aboard runners who lured sailors to shore. Desertion meant that the men were unable to collect wages from their previous voyage.*

missioner's Act prescribed that only sober seamen could sign agreements to ship out in a crew. Crimps subsequently circumvented the law by paying a few sober seamen to register again and again, signing the names of different unfortunate brethren. An 1879 resolution by several San Francisco shipowners to end the payment of blood money to crimps was defeated by a crimp boycott.

The federal Dingley Shipping Act of 1884 struck at the crimping system by prohibiting the payment of advance wages to crimps and by limiting (to near and dependent relatives) the "voluntary" allotments whereby a sailor could transfer his right to future payment. Unfortunately, the law underestimated the economic power of the crimps, and two years later Congress amended the act,<sup>11</sup> extending the class of allotment beneficiaries from near and dependent relatives to "original creditors" which included, of course, the crimps.

In 1885, in response to news of a substantial industry-wide wage reduction, sailors united to form the Coast Seamen's Union (later the Sailor's Union of the Pacific). The men immediately went out on strike, forcing the owners to make concessions. Buoyed by this success

## Seamen had no legal rights recognized by anyone, including governmental authorities.

union leaders pressed Congress to reenact the prohibition against pay advances and sailors' allotments, utilizing union vigilance for enforcement. Various efforts to unite the independent labor organizations scattered along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts also strengthened the reform movement and culminated in 1892 when the National Seamen's Union of America, renamed later the International Seamen's Union of America, formed.

The Seamen's Union fought to bring about the enactment of the Maguire Act of 1895, which although limited to seamen in the coastal trade, abolished imprisonment for desertion, the payment of allotments, and the attachment of sailors' clothing. Seamen had scarcely stopped rejoicing over their victory in breaking the crimps' stranglehold over their trade, however, when the United States Supreme Court rendered its infamous decision in *Robertson v Baldwin*.<sup>12</sup> Relying on the Maguire Act's provisions for the seamen's right to quit his vessel, several sailors who were dissatisfied with conditions aboard the *Arago* refused to continue on its voyage, and they were promptly arrested and imprisoned. Hearing the case, the court strictly construed the Maguire Act as inapplicable to their situation since the *Arago*'s coastwide voyage was only a leg of a foreign voyage. The court further held that the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibiting involuntary servitude did not protect seamen because of the special nature of their calling and because they had voluntarily signed the shipping articles specifying contractual conditions of employment. The *Arago* case in one stroke vitiated the sailors' hard-won political gains. The crimps, for their part, had not remained idle, having reinstituted an advance payment system by forcing shipowners to pay crimps the sailors' entire allotments although they had not yet fully earned them.

In the late 1890s seamen redoubled their efforts for remedial legislation, resulting in the passage of the White Act in 1898. Principally, it reduced the penalty for desertion and limited the amount of a seaman's wages that could be allotted to an "original creditor" in the foreign trade. The new law also improved the deplorable shipboard working conditions by abolishing corporal punishment, by entitling crews to determine a vessel's seaworthiness before a voyage, and by establishing standards for rations and quarters. The crimps proved equal to the threat of receiving lesser allotments and generally ignored or maneuvered around the new

federal statute by means of illegal advances, "shipping fees," and "bonuses."

Undaunted, the Seamen's Union spearheaded by Andrew Furuseth continued its campaign to reform maritime legislation. Finally, in 1906, Congress passed an act prohibiting shanghaiing and making crimping a misdemeanor punishable by heavy fines and even imprisonment.<sup>13</sup> When abuses continued nonetheless, it became clear that a revision of the entire maritime code was necessary.

In April 1912, the *Titanic* disaster in the Atlantic inflamed public sentiment for improving safety at sea, and politicians mindful of the election year capitalized on this suddenly popular issue by proposing legislation to reform the nation's merchant marine. The La Follette Seamen's Act of 1915 represented the triumph for which the seamen had been working. The Seamen's Act greatly improved the quality of facilities and provisions aboard ship, minimized penalties for desertion, and abolished allotments to "original creditors."

There is no record, of course, of the number of sailors who were shanghaied out of San Francisco and other ports, but the annual turnover must have been several thousand. During the 1890s it was estimated that between 800 and 1100 British seamen alone deserted their ships each year and were immediately shanghaied by crimps.<sup>14</sup> Not every seaman who sailed through the Golden Gate fell victim to the crimps and their runners, of course: many voluntarily returned to their ships after shore leave expired, many deserted on their own accord and contacted the crimps when they were ready to ship out again, and many ended their voyage at San Francisco.

That it was possible for shanghaiing to thrive for so many years can be partially explained by the sailors' reluctance to admit that they had been duped by crimps, the difficulty in obtaining witnesses after a lengthy voyage, and the fear of reprisal from the powerful shanghaiing fraternity. More importantly, however, seamen had no legal rights recognized by anyone, including governmental authorities. Effectively disfranchised and unable to participate in the voting process because of their lives at sea, sailors were regularly victimized until just seventy-five years ago. Only after sailors organized to form a recognized political constituency did the institution of shanghaiing, and the conditions aboard ship fostering its development, become a relic of the past. □ (See page 73 for notes.)



Oakland artist William Weaver Armstrong, who frequently signed his oil paintings. "WW. Armstrong," painted diffused romantic-realist canvases such as "Santa Cruz Redwoods."



In the annals of American art, there are many artists who share the same name. This has often led to confused biographical information and, worse, incorrect attribution of artistic works. The case of the two W.W. Armstrongs is particularly fascinating, for even the existence of the second artist by that name had eluded art historians. William Wallace Armstrong (1822–1915) of Toronto, Canada, has long been identified as a competent painter of Great Lakes and, erroneously, California landscapes. Many nineteenth-century landscapes of California held by the Smithsonian Institution, Oakland Museum, Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, and other leading national institutions have been inaccurately attributed to this Canadian artist and must rightfully be credited to another W.W. Armstrong, William Weaver Armstrong of Oakland. Born in 1862, William Weaver Armstrong painted in obscurity and only now has been discovered as a California landscapist. He worked roughly contemporaneously with his better-known Canadian counterpart, but the latter painter's peak artistic activity appears to have been in the 1860s and 1870s.

A comparison of the signatures of the two artists shows distinctly different treatment of their nearly identical names. The Canadian often signed his works simply "Armstrong" or "W. Armstrong" and occasionally used a monogram made up of superimposed letters "W" and "A." As seen on paintings held by the Oakland artist's family, the second W.W. Armstrong invariably printed his signature in a loose block style. A check of all biographical

# DISCOVERING A NEW CALIFORNIA PAINTER

Oakland's W.W. Armstrong emerges from obscurity to claim his California landscape paintings

*by Edan M. Hughes*

sources for nineteenth-century painters reveals no documented evidence that the Canadian painter ever traveled in California or that the Oakland painter ever left his adopted state. Finally, the Canadian painter worked almost exclusively in pastels and watercolors, painting detailed scenes of the railway activities and various Indian tribes in his area, while the Californian worked exclusively in oils, developing a more diffused, romantic-realist style. Both artists' works are relatively unsophisticated and lack the painterly styles of their academy-trained contemporaries.

While the Toronto-based painter drew his subjects from the Great Lakes region, the American Armstrong was strongly influenced by the American westward movement. His parents numbered among the many dissatisfied easterners attracted to California after the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. New Yorkers Bradley Adan Armstrong (1818–1904) and Mary Weaver, parents of six sons and a daughter, arrived in California about 1874. The elder Armstrong established a shop near the corner of Broadway and Fourteenth streets in Oakland. The small shop, which sold handcrafted frames, served as an art gallery where he exhibited his paintings and those by local artists. He also provided sign and carriage-painting services and was in demand as an auctioneer. Whatever formal training Bradley may have

Edan M. Hughes discovered the existence of the second W.W. Armstrong while doing research for his book, *Artists in California: 1786–1940*, to be released in Spring 1985.

Canadian William Wallace Armstrong sketched Great Lakes and Northern Plains scenes such as this pastel, "Northern Cheyenne or Sioux Encampment."

(Lower right) The Canadian artist often signed his works, many of which date to the 1860s and 1870s, "Armstrong" or "W. Armstrong." Signature from "Niagara Gorge Railway" (watercolor), Amon Carter Museum

(Bottom right) William Weaver Armstrong's signature from California painting, "Santa Cruz Redwoods."

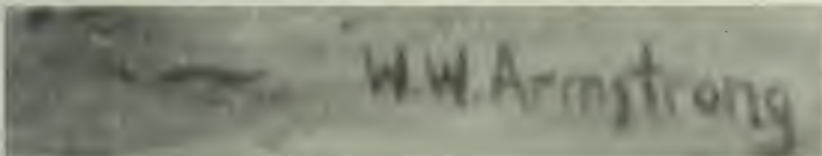
(Below) A fading reminder of the artistic Armstrong family is a still visible sign in San Francisco's Mission District.







AMON CARTER MUSEUM



had is unknown; however, he taught at least three of his sons to paint and became a popular and accomplished landscape painter of Mount Shasta, Yosemite, Mount Lassen, and other Northern California scenic spots. Today his works are rare, held mainly by family members and private collectors. Bradley Armstrong died at the family home at Twenty-eighth and Myrtle streets in Oakland on February 17, 1904.

One of Bradley's sons, Edward, is known only by an advertisement in the Oakland City Directory of 1880 as a sign and carriage painter. He apparently did not paint fine art.

The story of Bradley's eldest son, George Frederick Armstrong (1852-1912), is by comparison well documented. Fred, as he was called, was

active in civic affairs and a charter member of the Oakland Guards and was known throughout Northern California. About 1889 he moved across the bay to San Francisco and settled in the Mission District in a small cottage at 2828 Harrison Street. A handsome man with a fine singing voice, he always found an extra dollar in the family teapot for his children's piano and music lessons. During the 1890s Fred was commissioned by A.W. Foster, president of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, to paint scenes of Lake County resorts. These paintings hung for several years in San Francisco's Ferry Building. Fred also painted many landscapes of Yosemite, murals for San Francisco homes, and scenes of Italian milk

wagons and gypsy vans in San Francisco. A lung ailment caused by his long work with oil paint and turpentine preceded his death on August 5, 1912. Today, in a small alley named Balmy in the Mission District, a dilapidated barn which was once Fred's workshop still boasts the sign, "F. Armstrong, Sign and Carriage Painter."

The other artist in the Oakland Armstrong family, William Weaver, has managed to remain nearly anonymous. Born in Ontario, New York, his art training appears to have been solely from his father. First listed in the Oakland City Directory in 1884 as a farmer at 509 East Fourteenth Street, William changed his listing to "Artist" by 1887. According to family members, he was a quiet, taciturn man with little interest in socializing; he preferred to roam and sketch the California countryside. A prolific artist during his short life, he painted hundreds of landscapes of Northern California from Santa Cruz to the Oregon border. Often gone from his Oakland studio for months at a time, he made many trips into the wilderness of his adopted state. After one of these sketching expeditions, he returned with an Indian bride named Grace, much to the consternation of his parents. Very little was seen of the couple after their marriage. A victim of tuberculosis, William Weaver Armstrong died in Oakland on November 26, 1906, at age forty-four. Pulled back from obscurity, he lives on in the many paintings in major national collections attributed to the other W.W. Armstrong. □



by Tom Zimmerman

# PARADISE BOOSTERISM AND THE LOS ANGELES

**F**lying into Los Angeles International Airport at night, planes descend over the mountains east of San Bernardino and gradually settle into their glide path. The Los Angeles Basin spreads out west to the sea, and from the Santa Monica Mountains in the north to the Palos Verdes Peninsula in the south in a carpet of lights. Houses, stores, street lights, and moving cars on freeways create rivers, islands, and outposts of light which draw the attention of even the most blasé traveler.

The spectacle below is the result of the most single minded promotion of a city ever to occur in the United States. Beginning as early as the 1860s, two generations of city boosters, buttressed only by a pleasant climate, determinedly ignored the city's small population, its squat, functional buildings, its dirt streets, and its non-existent cultural life as they "sold" the city to the world. By the time this civic boosterism waned in the 1930s, Los Angeles had become the fourth largest urban area in America, leading the nation in agriculture, motion pictures, and aircraft production.

Several conditions nurtured this growth. The drought of the 1860s, which destroyed Los Angeles County's cattle industry and led to the break up of huge ranchos, started Los Angeles on its new urban course. Speculators eagerly purchased thousands of acres of land that came up for sale, knowing that if they were eventually to make profits, customers and social stability were necessary. The first Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce failed after four years, but its better

How the nation's longest and most successful public relations campaign made Los Angeles a world-class city



# PROMOTED LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Professional boosters put Los Angeles on the map beginning in the 1870s, and Chamber of Commerce photographers helped make the city famous for its beautiful girls and pseudo-events, such as Market Week.

organized successor, founded in 1888, took as its chief task providing both. Not only did it lure people over the enormous distances that separated Los Angeles from the rest of the country, but it made certain there were jobs and city services for them when they arrived.

Evidencing no desire to duplicate either the skylines or social problems of eastern cities, the new Chamber aimed most of its promotional literature and activity at the middle of the United States, giving only secondary attention to the Northeast and South and hardly a nod to foreign countries. The city's 150-foot building height limitation was enacted in 1905 not because of earthquake threats but because Los Angeles' leaders wanted to ensure a low-density city. Open-shop agitation was interpreted not only as a boon to owners of businesses but as a way of lessening political tensions inevitably arising from labor union activities.<sup>2</sup>

The primary hook for promoting the development of Los Angeles, however, was the climate. As Chamber President Maynard McFie reflected in 1921, "God had certainly wished on us in Southern California climate, but it has taken men of vision to capitalize on it."<sup>3</sup>

**G**iven the modern city's famous problems with smog, it is ironic that Los Angeles' earliest promoters were sanitarium owners who portrayed the area as one vast health spa. Comprehension of the causes and proper treatment of the various lung diseases called "consumption" in the nineteenth century was slim,

and one of the only known cures was to send patients who could financially afford it to a warm, dry climate. While the best known spas were in the south of Europe, doctors such as Robert Speir advised patients in 1873 to consider going to Southern California, "the Italy of America," before hurrying "your consumptive friend off to tramp over the well-worn tracks of the old world."<sup>4</sup>

By the time Speir's book appeared, Southern California's sanatorium business was booming, and the movement west by thousands of health seekers continued unabated until the end of the century. Some who found health in the area's gentle climate, Charles Dwight Willard, Charles F. Lummis, and Frank Wiggins, for example, went on to become leaders in Los Angeles' promotional campaign. Other cured visitors returned home and served as walking advertisements for the healthful California climates.

Widely read books, including Charles Nordhoff's *California: For Health, Pleasure, and Residence* and Benjamin Truman's *Semi-Tropical California*, both published within a decade of Lee's surrender at Appomattox, further promoted the healthful, even paradisaical nature of Southern California. Truman himself settled in Los Angeles and eventually wrote booster literature for the Southern Pacific Railroad, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the Chamber of Commerce.

By the turn of the century, this phase of boosterism by health seekers had run its course. As healthy people flocked to Southern California to take advantage of the boom,



significantly less effort was expended to recruit the sick. In addition, expanding medical knowledge made it unnecessary for tuberculars to go west for treatment.

The first focused and concentrated promotion of California came from the Southern Pacific Railroad, which was incorporated in 1870. As successor to the Central Pacific, the Southern Pacific sought to entice emigrants to begin buying the millions of acres of land granted to the company by local and federal government as inducement for laying track for the recently completed transcontinental railroad.

The railroad's promotional campaign was already several years old by the time a second golden spike was driven near Lang on September 6, 1876, linking Los Angeles to San Francisco and the rest of the country by rail. Most of the railroad's literature emerged from the fertile mind of its land agent, Jerome Madden, whose most popular works were *The Lands of the Southern Pacific* and *California: Its Attractions for the Invalid, Tourist, Capitalist, and Home-maker*. Madden stressed the state's climate, its plentiful, fertile, and cheap agricultural land, and the ease of reaching California on the Southern Pacific.<sup>7</sup>

One drawback to this activity from Los Angeles' point of view was that the Southern Pacific, like the California Immigrant Union and the Pacific Coast Land Bureau, was headquartered in the much larger and more

established city of San Francisco. As a result, Southern California was always a poor relation in the Southern Pacific's promotional work for its national land holdings. If Los Angeles was to occupy center stage, it would need to develop its own booster network.<sup>9</sup>

**T**he first Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, started in 1873, lasted only four years. The depression sweeping California and the nation in the 1870s led to the failure of so many local banks and businesses that the Chamber no longer had enough subscribers to remain active. During this brief span, however, the organization managed to publish and distribute 5000 copies of *Condition, Progress, and Advantages of Los Angeles City and County, Southern California* by A.T. Hawley, a local newsman. In common with the railroad publications, the pamphlet described the ease of transportation into the area by train and exhibited a general bias toward agriculture as the best way of life in Southern California. All the publication's emphasis was placed south of the Tehachapi Mountains, where "the climate is essentially that of the northern part of the state but robbed of its cold winds and grown softer and milder." *Condition, Progress and Advantages* further urged people to move quickly to what promised to be a major city in the near future.<sup>10</sup>

But growth came very gradually in Los Angeles, and even the unprecedented land boom of 1885–1887 ended with about 1000 people leaving the city each month. This net decrease in population alarmed business leaders who wrote: "At this critical moment in the city's history,



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*In this twilight vision looking up Wilshire Boulevard in 1928, haloed streetlights, billboards promoting real estate and Frigidaires, and a restaurant shaped like a hat suggest to travelers the possibilities of California living.*

*In bathing costumes studded with flowers, beauties vie for the title of Venice's most lovely, a (promotionally) significant event noted by a Chamber of Commerce photographer c. 1924.*

*Teacher and class take to the beach c. 1936 for another Chamber photographer, illustrating the healthful nature of Southern California's citizenry, and that anything is possible there.*

there was a sudden realization of the need for an effective agency to come forward to allay the doubts and strengthen the courage of the citizens." Accordingly, on October 10, 1888, these men founded the second Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.<sup>11</sup>

The fifty-seven original members of the Chamber of Commerce began an organization that would become the most influential and active group in this very loosely structured city. The Chamber's leadership in the fights to provide adequate sewerage, public transportation, and road expansion helped keep the city one step ahead of its constantly growing population. The Chamber helped bring the water of the Owens Valley and the Colorado River to Los Angeles. The Chamber lobbied tirelessly for federal assistance in dredging the largest man-made harbor in the world out of the mud flats at San Pedro—after leading the battle to have that formerly independent community annexed to Los Angeles. The Chamber's Industrial Bureau successfully attracted large and small industries to the city. But the Chamber also found time to promote the city and county of Los Angeles in an inspired variety of ways. For fifty years the organization remained true to the words of Frank Wiggins, its indefatigable first Director of Promotions: "The Chamber sleeps not when it comes to keeping the country informed that Los Angeles occupies a most advantageous spot on the map of the United States."<sup>12</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce proved to be the leading voice in the campaign to promote Los Angeles, but it did not labor alone. The Los Angeles Realty Board financed sev-

eral organizations charged with recruiting people to Southern California. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors paid the Chamber a yearly stipend to prepare exhibits of county products and attractions for fairs and expositions held around the United States. The motion picture industry assisted the Chamber indirectly with a few promotional films about the Southlands, but more importantly by making Hollywood the home of the stars, a great lure for tourists and prospective settlers.<sup>13</sup>

The Automobile Club of Southern California, although primarily interested in improving conditions for car owners, became increasingly active in Southern California boosterism under the leadership of Standish Mitchell. In 1914 it began the massive project of erecting directional signs on the National Old Trails Road (the old Santa Fe Trail) between Los Angeles and Kansas City. This was followed two years later by similar projects on the Midland Trail from Los Angeles to Ely, Nevada, and the Lincoln Highway from Ely to Omaha. Featuring the distance to the next town, all signs carried the logo, "Auto Club of So. Calif." The Club's primary reason for the signs was to "induce motorists to come to Southern California."<sup>14</sup>

The 1920s ushered in the golden age of Southern California boosterism. During this decade advertising became more visual in its appeal, and hedonism became acceptable as a motif. This more colorful approach to selling the city was used by both the Chamber of Commerce and a new group it helped to found in 1921, the All Year Club.

The All Year Club represented the conviction of the Chamber, Los

Angeles Realty Board, Southern Pacific Railroad, and especially Harry Chandler, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, that not enough was being done to promote summer tourism to Southern California. Noting that in 1921 some 60 percent of the resident population of Los Angeles had originally come to the city only to visit, All Year Club Executive Secretary C. G. Milham set about blanketing America with copy on Southern California's charms.

Milham accomplished this in a variety of ways. The Chamber of Commerce and Automobile Club funneled requests for road maps, places of interest, and tourist accommodations to the All Year Club, which followed up the requests by mailing tourist literature. The club distributed beautifully illustrated pamphlets such as *Southern California Through the Camera* free at hotels, conventions, railroad stations, and many other sites. All of the club's publications, the most prominent being *Southern California: Year-Round Vacationland Supreme* and *Southern California All The Year*, featured the same theme. The area was "A Land of Infinite Variety," where tourists could choose between winter skiing or sunning. Southern California summers featured "balmy, rainless days and cool nights," making it the "all-year playground of America." Los Angeles offered plenty to see—movie studios, the La Brea Fossil Pits, the Chamber of Commerce Exhibit Hall, and Cawston's Ostrich Farm were within the city limits. Los Angeles' excellent system of highways and public transportation made everything within easy reach for the tourist. (Individuals who wrote to express interest in buying

*Clockwise from right:*

*Family tourist attractions such as the Lincoln Park Zoo's Ostrich Farm made Los Angeles popular with winter and, later, summer tourists brought to the area with the help of the All Year Club.*

*Chamber exhibits of Los Angeles County agricultural products travelled around the country, while Orange Girls (photograph c. 1946) made the produce all the sweeter.*

*The area's mild climate and plentiful, fertile, and cheap agricultural land—evidenced in this March 1928 view of new San Gabriel Valley orange groves—were regular themes in railroad and Chamber of Commerce publications.*

*Chamber photographer Arch Dunning helped amass the Chamber's estimated 50,000-image stock photo file begun in 1923.*







land or employment were directed to the Chamber of Commerce.)<sup>16</sup>

Collaboration with the All Year Club did not mean that the Chamber eliminated its own promotional efforts. Since its inception, the Chamber's objective was not only "to promote the business interests of Southern California," but also "to induce immigration, and the subdivision, settlement, and cultivation of our lands."<sup>17</sup> For over thirty years the Chamber had been sending millions of pamphlets, pre-fabricated exhibits of Southern California products, trained speakers, and a "California on Wheels" railroad car packed with literature and products to all corners of the United States. As the campaign reached its most aggressive stage in the mid-1920s, the Chamber could properly congratulate itself that "the great movement of population to California was started by the Chamber through a great advertising campaign of our resources, climate, etc. Los Angeles is now the largest city in the western Americas."<sup>18</sup>

By the 1920s the promotional machinery largely set up by Frank Wiggins, secretary and general manager of exhibits since 1899, industriously turned out colorful travel tips, brochures, advice to manufacturers in Los Angeles County, and area guide books such as *Los Angeles To-Day*. The only new addition to the propaganda arsenal was the Chamber's stock photograph file which was begun in 1923. The file covered Los Angeles in the 1920s and 1930s in detail before it began to be phased out during the 1940s and ended entirely in 1955.<sup>19</sup> Prior to its demise, an estimated 50,000 images showing Los Angeles and its environs—from scenes of busy street intersections



and evidence of commercial progress to bathing beauties, ethnic festivals and tourist curiosities—were filed in the Chamber's growing photo archives.

The photographs appeared in the Chamber's own publications as well as those in other parts of the country. They were also printed in the monthly Hanger Sheet, which was sent by the Chamber to over 500 eastern railway and steamship ticket offices and travel bureaus. In 1928 alone, 16,520 Chamber prints were distributed, and another 460 colored lantern slides were provided to sixty-two lecturers in both the United States and foreign countries.<sup>20</sup>

Not surprisingly, photographers Arch Dunning, who took pictures for the Chamber from 1923 to 1928, and Newton Berlin, his successor, carefully put forth the city's most pleasant face, for instance, shooting factories from the outside or avoiding views of harsh working conditions. Prints given the Chamber by the industries themselves were sometimes less scrupulous in protecting their image, however, and in these gift photos, pots boiled, workers sweated, and floors needed sweeping.<sup>21</sup>

Because the Chamber gave such careful attention to amassing a photo file of positive images, the file does not tell the modern viewer a great deal about social problems of the times. The file does, however, reveal the motifs exploited in the most efficient and multi-faceted urban promotional campaign in American history. Climate, of course, was emphasized in a variety of ways. Not only was it portrayed as encouraging an active life out-of-doors, but it was seen as helping to



*Building a breakwater and dredging the largest man-made harbor in the world out of the mud flats of San Pedro were among the Chamber's major successes (photograph c. 1924 with battleship in foreground).*

*The healthfulness and pleasure of life-out-of-doors remained an essential theme of the Chamber's promotional literature, even in the Depression (1937 view of library table in Pershing Square).*

*Bungalows replaced tenement housing, making workers in Los Angeles more content than back East, according to Chamber promotional literature (view of typical homes at 4th Avenue near 54th Street in 1926).*





*Indefatigable Promotional Director Frank Wiggins (photograph c. 1922) orchestrated a steady flow of Chamber exhibits and publications for three decades.*



provide a contented labor force. This was a theme stressed by the Chamber's Industrial Department which successfully convinced numerous manufacturers to shift their operations to Los Angeles or open branch offices in the city. Workers were more content in Southern California than the East, the Chamber claimed, because they left behind their "old associations" when they relocated in the home of the open shop. In addition, the city's cool evenings and lack of humidity allowed the laborer to find "rest and refreshment from his daily tasks." Even workers' housing in Los Angeles contributed to general contentment: "The tenement is unknown here, and the workers live in their own little bungalows, surrounded by plenty of land for fruits, vegetables and flowers, and where children romp and play throughout the entire year under climatic conditions that are as nearly ideal as exist anywhere on the face of the earth."<sup>22</sup>

Chamber propaganda also emphasized how Southern California's climate would make the area the aeronautics capital of the nation. Dr. Ford Carpenter, a meteorologist with the United States Weather Bureau and the Army who became the first manager of the Chamber's Department of Meteorology and Aeronautics in 1918, published countless articles combining his technical expertise with the boosterism associated with all Chamber activities. Carpenter's photographs regularly illustrated his arguments that the number of clear or semi-cloudy days in Southern California made the area a natural choice for the headquarters of the aeronautics industry. Similarly, Chamber photographs regularly covered local visits by aviation

heroes such as Charles Lindbergh or the stop made by the German dirigible *Graf Zeppelin* on its round-the-world flight in 1929. Events that united both aviation and business expansion, such as the opening of the American Railway Express air freight service in 1927, received particular Chamber attention.<sup>23</sup>

Detailed coverage of aeronautical events reflected the Chamber's emphasis on transportation in general. During the 1920s, the population center of the United States was in Illinois, 2200 miles from Los Angeles. The majority of people who came to Los Angeles to settle or sightsee came by train, and not surprisingly, the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroad terminals and trains were regularly photographed for the Chamber's stock photo file. But the Chamber was also well aware of the new transcontinental motor highways that were being developed by federal and local governments and being given road signs by the Automobile Club of Southern California, and Chamber publications boasted that Los Angeles had more cars per capita than any other city in the world.<sup>24</sup>

While public transportation was clearly losing its battle with the private automobile, Chamber photographs and publications continued to feature the city's extensive interurban streetcar network. Because the Los Angeles basin was still cheaply and frequently served by the cars of the Pacific Electric and Los Angeles Railway systems, the Chamber and the All Year Club published timetables and route maps of the lines. The only part of the Pacific Electric system that was never mentioned in Chamber promotional literature was the Hollywood Subway,

*The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Collection of approximately 15,000 negatives and 12,000 prints has been donated to the CHS History Center in Los Angeles. As the images are cataloged and processed, they are available to the public. The collection is especially strong in images of Los Angeles in the 1920s and 1930s, making it a rare and valuable resource for researchers. For more information, contact the Los Angeles History Center.*

a line running from the Subway Terminal Building on Hill Street three-fifths of a mile underground toward Hollywood. Whatever salutary effects the subway had on downtown congestion, it did not fit with the Chamber's promotion of "the land of the beckoning climate."<sup>25</sup>

The Chamber also took great pride in the central leadership role it played in converting San Pedro into a deep water harbor capable of handling large commercial ships. Extensive federally supported dredging had been required to create a viable harbor and construct a breakwater to do the job performed naturally by the Golden Gate in San Francisco and Cabrillo Point in San Diego. Chamber literature emphasized the role the harbor played in the industrial growth of Los Angeles, and its final opening was one of the factors that encouraged the Chamber of Commerce to inaugurate its Industrial Bureau in 1915. What followed was a shift in Chamber literature from promoting Los Angeles as an agricultural area to touting it as a manufacturer's paradise. Although Los Angeles continued to be the

leading agricultural county in the United States into the 1940s, the Chamber felt that the growth of industry was necessary if Southern California was to take its place as an important American city.<sup>26</sup>

Celebrating Los Angeles' industrial growth never got in the way of advertising the good life found there. Describing the Samson Tyre and Rubber Company building, which featured pseudo-Babylonian priest-kings carved into its walls, one Chamber publication noted, "Here the eye for business has not closed for beauty." Neither Samson Tyre and Rubber nor any of the other factories in Chamber illustrations belched smoke. The harbor was uncluttered with foul-looking barges or decrepit tubs, and even the industrial sections of Los Angeles somehow sparkled with the same aura of healthiness that suffused the beaches and mountains surrounding the city.<sup>27</sup>

An example of how Los Angeles industries were made to seem different appears in a series of photo essays about cities published in *The Independent* magazine in 1928. Only in the case of Los Angeles were all the pictures in the essay provided by a chamber of commerce. The photographs of St. Louis, Duluth, Kansas City, and Cleveland, supplied by local chambers of commerce and stock photo houses such as Ewing Galloway, depict the eastern cities as uniformly workaday. Even parks offer only mild respite from the grime of the lovingly depicted factories and industrialized rivers. Los Angeles, on the other hand, appears as a twentieth-century garden of Eden. New buildings shimmer white in bright sunlight, and oil fields coexist with orange groves.<sup>28</sup>







*The rails carried most tourists to Southern California in the mid-1920s, and photographers duly captured their arrival in the Santa Fe station at 6th and Central, an arresting crenelated building guaranteed to let tourists know they had finally reached Xanadu.*

*Aviation and business expansion meld for a Chamber photographer in 1927 as two ladies symbolically deposit their valuables in the new Air Express Service's armored box under the watchful eye of the airplane pilot.*

*Aviation hero Charles Lindbergh's triumphal visit to Los Angeles in 1927 offered Chamber photographers the opportunity to promote Southern California as the potential aviation capital of the world.*



The numerous cityscapes found in the Los Angeles Chamber's stock photo file also depicted growth and substantiality in a pleasant atmosphere. Buildings are tall enough to be imposing without being overwhelming, and they reveal a busy commercial life. City guide books published by the Chamber tended instead to feature amusement centers such as Gay's Lion Farm or Wrigley Field, home of the Pacific Coast League Los Angeles Angels, or programmatic architecture such as ice cream stores shaped like igloos. General publications like *Los Angeles To-Day* or *Los Angeles: City and County* featured both styles of architecture.<sup>29</sup>

Overall, the exotic won out over the sober in most promotional literature. This was evident even in the types of trees—the palm and eucalyptus—imported and planted in Los Angeles fertile soil to lend a unique look to the city. Every effort was made to present Los Angeles, as a city where anything was possible. Santa Catalina, an island twenty-six miles off San Pedro, became an "enchanted isle of the Pacific." In one memorable series of photos in the file, a school, complete with globe, desks, and teacher in her bathing suit, convened at the beach. Similarly, photos of Abbot Kinney's Venice development showed not only an extensive amusement zone but a city with houses, parks, factories, trees, and tall buildings. Venice emerged as the most exotic locale an American could enjoy without crossing an international border.<sup>30</sup>

Boosters never dwell on the drawbacks of their projects, and in the case of Los Angeles the brush fires that plagued its dry hills in the sum-

mer months were neither photographed nor discussed. In 1906 the Chamber published *Los Angeles, May 1, 1906*, which explained that the city, 500 miles south of San Francisco, suffered none of the damage inflicted on its northern neighbor by the earthquake and fire of April 18, 1906. It further claimed, "Geologists say that the rock formation underlying the city of Los Angeles is of such a nature that it is as safe from the danger of earthquake as any locality in the United States."<sup>31</sup> The existence of earthquakes was officially denied until the destruction caused by the Long Beach-Compton quake on March 10, 1933, made this impossible. The worst disaster ever to strike the city, the collapse of the St. Francis Dam on March 13, 1928, which killed 451 people, was only covered in a report prepared by the Chamber for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.<sup>32</sup>

In Chamber literature and photographs, ethnic and racial minorities, working class environments, unions, and political organizations were also considered inappropriate for city promotion. (In contrast, the 1981 official celebration of the Los Angeles Bicentennial in 1981 stressed the city's cultural diversity.) The few Latinos portrayed either worked in agricultural fields or danced on ceremonial occasions. Chinese appeared only to celebrate Chinese new year or as props in China City, as the new Chinatown was called. Indians wore archaic costumes, and blacks went unnoticed entirely.

By the 1920s when the stock photo file was being expanded, promotional literature no longer needed to demonstrate that Los Angeles was a bona fide city. The fine houses and busy downtown scenes of the early



*Abbot Kinney's Venice showed modest bungalows and a downtown (along Windward Avenue) with plenty of parking to Chamber photographers. Exotic moorish arcades and peaceful, if foreign, canals let tourists know they were no longer in Dubuque.*







*Like the buffalo, minorities vanished from Chamber photographs, to reappear only in carefully staged (and often highly fictionalized) settings.*

photographic books gave way to a celebration of the personal joy afforded by the Southern California climate. This emphasis on personal pleasure reflected the general trends in nationwide advertising during the 1920s.<sup>34</sup> The black and white austerity of *The County and City of Los Angeles in Southern California* (1893) with its descriptions of the agricultural paradise found near the city gave way to the full-colored enticements of *Los Angeles To-Day* (1912–1929) which concentrated on things to see and do. According to one writer, the city had “no depressing heat, no insect pests. It is not an enervating climate, but bracing and full of electricity.”<sup>35</sup>

**D**uring the depression years of the 1930s, the Chamber continued to add to the stock photo file but ceased publication of its enticement literature. It continued to send exhibits to state fairs and commercial expositions and put them on display at Chamber headquarters, but the travelling boosters working for the Speakers Bureau were recalled. Even the All Year Club toned down its campaign for tourists, dropping expensive promotional publications such as *Southern California Through the Camera* and contenting itself with maps and sightseeing guides. Guides bore the legend, “WARNING! While attractions for tourists are unlimited, please advise anyone seeking employment not to come to Southern California, as natural attractions have already drawn so many capable, experienced people that the present demand is more than satisfied.”<sup>36</sup>

The war years brought an influx of workers for Southern California’s

numerous defense plants, and the post-war years saw many veterans returning to the city they first saw on their way to the Pacific Theater of Operations. There was no need to start the Chamber’s promotional campaign again. By 1948, when the Chamber was congratulating itself on sixty years of service to Los Angeles, the entire booster campaign was relegated to a few paragraphs to make way for the more serious and continuing Chamber business of celebrating the free enterprise system.

Today the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce operates similarly to other chambers around the country, concerning itself with community business interests and civic improvement plans. Its headquarters at 4th and Bixel Streets, occupied since 1956, has rooms for various bureaus and business meetings, but no space for the ten-foot elephant made of walnuts that formerly graced the exhibit center in its roomier headquarters on Broadway.

The designers of the Chamber’s nineteenth and early twentieth century promotional campaign took it for granted that the rest of the country would be enraptured with Southern California if it only knew more about the area, and time proved the Chamber correct. The area’s population at least doubled every ten years from 11,000 in 1880 to 1,238,000 in 1930, as the city grew from an insignificant frontier town to one of the leading cities in America. □

All the photographs in this article are from the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce/CHS Photograph Collection. (See page 73 for notes.)







# OAKLAND'S WATER WAR

Competing private utilities bring water  
—and chaos—  
to Oakland in the 1890s

by Sherwood D. Burgess

Two newspaper headlines seem much the same: "Water—sodium, other pollutants potential health hazards" and "Warned Danger lurking in water." The threats, however, appeared nearly ninety years apart the former in the *Contra Costa Times* on May 16, 1983, and the latter in the *Oakland Tribune* on May 14, 1895. Hundreds of similar headlines can be found in the archives of dozens of California papers because the purity of drinking water and the control of scarce water resources have been ongoing historical problems for the communities of the arid California coast.

During the 1890s the San Francisco Bay city of Oakland found itself being served by two competing water companies, each struggling to acquire water resources and customers. The often violent, sometimes ludicrous, "Oakland Water War," as it came to be known, threw the city into turmoil and dispelled the myth that a community can benefit from competing public utilities.

For more than two decades before the water war of the 1890s, Oak-

land's water supply had been monopolized by the Contra Costa Water Company. Through the efforts of engineer-philanthropist Anthony Chabot, a hydraulic-mining developer and the founder of many Bay Area water systems, the company had constructed two major catchment reservoirs in the East Bay hills—Lake Temescal above Oakland and Lake Chabot to the south near San Leandro. By all accounts the company charged high rates for muddy water of doubtful purity. Although the water rates were set by the Oakland city council, it was charged that the water company determined who sat on the council. As long as the likeable Chabot returned part of the profits to the city through his many charities, public resentment remained below the surface.<sup>1</sup> Then, in 1888, Chabot's death left his more ruthless chief associate, Henry Pierce, with complete power over Contra Costa Water Company activities.

Eclipsed by the shadow of the well-known Chabot, Pierce had been the company's little publicized "inside" man. When Pierce assumed full control of company operations, the company became increasingly arrogant and lost its good will in the community. Patrons who complained about rates or quality of water were bluntly told they were not being forced to subscribe to the water service and then found their rates raised. Throughout the '80s

and '90s, the name Contra Costa Water Company grew to symbolize to Oaklanders the zenith of corporate ruthlessness.<sup>2</sup>

As Oakland's disgruntled water customers increased in numbers, there arose to prominence an ambitious, amiable young man in his early twenties, William Dingee. Dingee started his working life in the mid-1870s as a clerk in a real estate office. Within ten years he had become the city's leading realtor and an active developer of vast areas of hill land east of the city. As Oakland's leading "booster" through his various public relations activities, he gained wide-spread popularity. About 1890 he built Fernwood, a three-story, nineteen-room mansion with extensive gardens in the Oakland hills. It was one of the most elegant homes in Alameda County.<sup>3</sup>

Dingee, of course, needed a water supply for his vast estate, but it was above the level of Temescal reservoir and could not be supplied by the Contra Costa Water Company. Not one to let obstacles block his path, Dingee found that by boring tunnels about 300 feet long into the present Montclair District hills, an abundant source of ground water could be tapped for his needs. Soon having far more water than necessary for his estate, Dingee incorporated the Piedmont Springs Water and Power Company and built a small water system to supply his extensive real estate holdings in present-day Pied-

*Dingee's complaints about the Oakland Board of Health's investigation into the purity of Lake Temescal's watershed were picked up by the muckraking San Francisco Call on February 28, 1895.*

*Microscopic analysis of the Contra Costa Company's water showed it to be full of bacterial organisms, sketched for curious readers by a staff artist at the Oakland Daily Tribune on April 15, 1895.*

mont near Montclair. With plenty of water at his disposal, the ambitious entrepreneur could not resist the temptation to expand his system down the rolling Piedmont hills into Oakland. By May 1892 his pipes had invaded the downtown Oakland domain of the Contra Costa Water Company.<sup>4</sup>

Dingee then realized that he had overstepped his capabilities. His little hill-section water company now found itself in competition with the powerful Contra Costa Company, and Dingee had neither sufficient capital nor water sources to challenge the big monopoly. Accordingly, in late 1892 he offered to sell his system at cost to the Contra Costa Company, but Pierce contemptuously refused the offer, hoping to bankrupt the upstart and obtain the Piedmont Water Company facilities for practically nothing.<sup>5</sup> This decision would ultimately ruin Pierce's company, cost him his job, and throw Oakland into the most tumultuous years of its history.

When Pierce refused Dingee's offer, the undaunted Dingee sought the two things he needed most to survive—more money and more water. In the spring of 1893 he found both. He bought a large area of artesian or water-bearing fields near San Francisco Bay at Alvarado about twenty miles south of Oakland and in addition interested two San Francisco capitalists, Alvinza Hayward and Andrew Rose, Jr., in his project.

Sherwood D. Burgess, retired director of Heald Colleges, Oakland and Walnut Creek, is writing a biography of Anthony Chabot, founder of the Contra Costa Water Company.



While expanding the mains of the Piedmont Company until they covered all of downtown Oakland and served an ever-growing list of subscribers, Dingee concentrated his efforts in 1893 on digging artesian wells at Alvarado. By the end of that year he had wells capable of producing fifteen million gallons a day, many times the city's needs.<sup>6</sup>

Dingee then made Oakland an offer that could have changed its history. He proposed to pipe his water to the city and sell it wholesale to a municipally-owned distribution system. Long and fruitless debates followed, resulting in the council losing this chance to institute municipal ownership of its water thirty years before the eventual establishment of the East Bay Municipal Utility District. Disgusted by the council's in-

*Artesian wells at Alvarado produced 15 million gallons of water a day for the Oakland Water Company (President William Dingee probably stands at left), which battled with the Central Costa Company to supply the city of Oakland's water. From Calderwood and Loofbourow, *Facts and Figures of Alameda County* (1896)*

decision, Dingee withdrew his offer in August 1893.<sup>7</sup>

In December, Dingee, Rose, and Hayward moved on their own to organize the Oakland Water Company. Dingee's Piedmont Water Company continued its separate existence for another year and then sold out to the Oakland Water Company at a handsome personal profit for Dingee. In 1894 Oakland Water built a pumping plant at Alvarado, and by the end of the year the Alvarado artesian water was added to that produced by the hillside tun-





nels. The upstart Dingee had become a formidable rival to Pierce's Contra Costa Water Company.<sup>8</sup>

Contra Costa Company also developed other problems. In 1893 the company lost its political control of the city through the election of a reform mayor, George Pardee, and a hostile city council. In January 1894 the new council reduced water rates by thirty percent. When a belligerent Pierce threatened a lawsuit, a smiling Dingee posed as the city's benefactor and approved the cut. Next, the new city council gave Oakland Water Company all the city's hydrant business. Finally, financial difficulties began to plague Contra Costa Company as competition caused profits and dividends to drop, and eastern brokers refused to buy a new bond issue.<sup>9</sup>

As the months of 1894 passed, both companies made increasingly disparaging public remarks about the purity of the other's water and maneuvered for public good will and political advantage. Neither was above pettiness. As fate would have it, Contra Costa Company offices were located in the Dingee Building, and humiliated company officials were forced to drink their rival's water. In retaliation Contra Costa Company employees abandoned years of conservative water use and became very wasteful with water, prompting Dingee to counter by increasing the company's rent to an unheard-of \$500 a month. This forced a quick evacuation from his premises.<sup>10</sup> The pettiness soon developed into an all-out battle for survival, and few cities have witnessed

*Water for Fernwood, Dingee's elegant home and gardens in the hills of Piedmont, came from tunnels bored into the hills above the level of the Temescal Reservoir, which was owned by the Contra Costa Water Company.*

corporation warfare as vicious as the resulting Oakland Water War of 1895.

Both companies began the year by cutting their rates far below the legally set ceiling, and wild cut-throat competition followed. No sooner would a resident subscribe to one company than an agent from its rival would offer a lower rate. While a few people sentimentally stayed with the old company and a few others paid higher rates for the supposed purity of the new company's artesian water, most people

## For three years the rate-cutting phase of the water war continued until both companies were near bankruptcy.

enjoyed the competition and happily played one company against the other by switching companies every few weeks.<sup>11</sup> For three years the rate-cutting phase of the water war continued until both companies were near bankruptcy.

Dingee added a new element to the battle by opening a "germ warfare" offensive. He wrote to the County Board of Health that the watershed of Contra Costa Company's Lake Temescal, which included the land on which his own estate was built, was full of dead cows and that barnyards and out-houses lined the creeks flowing into the reservoir. Local newspapers seized on the story, and the *San Francisco Call* sent a reporter to the present-day Montclair area. His lurid report of the filth he encountered was illustrated by drawings of dead cows. These cows, he claimed, were "probable victims of tuberculosis. . . . Winter rains poured through the bodies from the watershed and carried the germs of the disease which destroyed them through the water pipes of Oakland and into many a home."<sup>12</sup>

This was but a preview of the articles and pictures which were to fill the papers in the spring of 1895. The *Oakland Enquirer* published a similarly critical report on the Lake Chabot watershed, and the *Tribune* soon took up Oakland Water Company's cause with a full page of drawings of microscope slides showing bewhiskered germs wiggling in the Contra Costa water. When numerous analyses by a University of California professor showed the water unfit to drink, the *Tribune* climaxed its campaign with a three-column article headed: "WARNED. Dangers Lurking in

Water." It contained the following potent assessment of Oakland's drinking water:

*The water stored in Lake Chabot and Lake Temescal contains more animal rotteness than any other in the world . . . The smell of the Contra Costa water during the summer is indescribable. It is the perfume of the morgue. It reminds of slaughter houses where sanitary inspectors never come . . . The Contra Costa water habit is as debilitating as the opium habit or the whiskey habit. Thousands of Oakland citizens are suffering from the Contra Costa water habit. . . . They awake in the morning with bad tastes in their mouths . . . They are weak of stomach and weary of brain. They are constantly calling the doctor. Eventually they call the undertaker. The doctors know what is the matter. They know it is the result of the Contra Costa Water habit. . . .*<sup>13</sup>

The wounded Contra Costa Company met this attack by hiring another professor who claimed that the water was pure, but when a public test by experts of the two waters was proposed, Contra Costa Company backed down. It countered, however, by claiming that Oakland Water Company water was alkaline, and it exhibited as evidence a sediment-clogged waterback from a stove through which Dingee's water had passed. The Dingee-paid professor branded the evidence as fake, while Contra Costa Company's professor said it was authentic. For a time Oakland's water war threatened to boil over into the faculty club of the university. Dingee set up his own display of Contra Costa water samples that could be examined under microscopes by anyone who had the stomach to look.<sup>14</sup>

By the end of June the biological

warfare had peaked, and Oaklanders seemed resigned to drink Contra Costa Company's germs or the Oakland Water Company's alkali. But a more violent phase of the war was just beginning, although it started as an accident. To celebrate the Fourth of July 1895, Dingee installed some fountains in Lake Merritt and released water under great pressure to demonstrate the power of his system. Suddenly a new fountain appeared, not in the lake, but in a nearby street. Dingee's main water line had burst, and water pressure throughout the city dropped to almost zero. For almost a day, Oakland Water Company subscribers were forced to borrow buckets of "germ-laden" Contra Costa water from their neighbors.<sup>15</sup>

Joyful about this incident, Pierce and his Contra Costa officials wanted more of them. A few days later Oakland Water Company subscribers gagged on the saline, murky mess that poured from their faucets. Contra Costa agents immediately spread the word that Dingee's wells had gone dry, but Dingee soon found the real answer. At Alvarado holes had been punched in a flume where it crossed a salt water inlet between a well and the pump, mixing salt water with the fresh. Despite the seemingly simple explanation, more people became convinced that Contra Costa Company water, if turgid, was at least reliable.<sup>16</sup>

A few weeks later the Oakland Company's water pressure dropped so low that the upper floors of buildings received no water and the city was at the mercy of fire for two days. Dingee claimed his water main between Alvarado and Oakland had been sabotaged, but when he announced that service was restored





many of his subscribers who were still waterless concluded that Dingee's system was completely out. Investigation showed that the valves in front of their homes had been turned off during the night. Meanwhile, someone shut off the valve of a major reservoir to disrupt service in the Piedmont area.<sup>17</sup>

Contra Costa Company then played its trump card. Buying land near Dingee's wells in Alvarado, it dug its own artesian wells and, in a futile effort to dry-up Dingee's wells, pumped three million gallons of artesian water into the bay each day. The resulting storm of public protest lost Contra Costa Company whatever popularity it had gained from Dingee's misfortunes, and after two months the effort was abandoned.<sup>18</sup>

During the next two years, the war lessened in tempo. Except for the dynamiting of one of Oakland Company's reservoirs, violence ceased.<sup>19</sup> The germ propaganda war continued, though less vigorously than earlier and price under-cutting continued more viciously than ever.

By mid-1897 both companies had fallen in serious trouble. Contra Costa Company's stock had dropped from 100 in 1893 to 32; dividends went unpaid, and company bonds were worthless. But Dingee had also fallen from favor. He was no longer a hero to the city council, which turned part of the hydrant business back to the old company. In September 1897 his system clogged with sand, causing low pressure for a week. In December Dingee reprinted thousands of

*Water mains of the two competing water companies snaked through growing downtown Oakland by 1893 (view looking up 14th Street).*

copies of a Board of Health bulletin warning residents to boil Contra Costa Company water before drinking it, but this move had little effect; surviving Contra Costa Company subscribers seemed thoroughly immune to water-borne germs. Both companies were plagued with hundreds of delinquent accounts as customers refused to pay their bills, knowing well that neither company would cut off their service. There was only one thing to do and that was call a truce.<sup>20</sup>

In January 1898 a truce was agreed upon. Both companies openly pledged to charge the legal rates and tacitly agreed to stop other forms of



CHS, SAN FRANCISCO



CHS, SAN FRANCISCO

*Newspaper exposés such as a scathing account in the Oakland Enquirer (above right) revealed that barnyards and waterclosets were polluting the Lake Temescal (above) and Lake Chabot watersheds (Left) Photos of an earlier time suggest the formerly sylvan quality of Alameda County's watershed.*





# ON TOP OF HER WORLD

## ANNA MILLS' ASCENT OF MT. WHITNEY

by Leonard Daughenbaugh

For mountaineering men and women, California's Sierra Nevada has posed a unique allure. Boasting a cluster of the highest mountain peaks in the lower forty-eight United States and virtually unexplored until little more than a century ago, this 400-mile long mountain range has challenged nineteenth and twentieth century climbers to test the depth of their physical strength and mental courage.

Native Americans living on the eastern and western approaches to the Sierra were, undoubtedly, the first to travel and climb in the range, but only legends remain to describe the important part it played in their religious and ceremonial lives. For example, legend has it that the Indian maiden Tee-hee-neh rappelled to the base of the Lost Arrow Spire on lodgepole saplings joined together with deer thongs to recover the lifeless body of her despondent lover, Kos-soo-kah.<sup>1</sup>

Portuguese sailor Juan Cabrillo gave the name "las sierras nevadas" (the snowy range) to a group of mountains he observed while sailing down the coast of California in 1542. Since he could not have seen the true



Helen Gompertz and two friends, posed with Sierra cups and straw sun hats atop the summit of Mt. Lyell in 1897, were among California's pioneer women mountaineers.





Sierra from the coast, the first Europeans to see the range were members of Captain Pedro Fages' party in 1772. In 1776, members of the Anza expedition to San Francisco Bay also viewed the range. They called it, "una gran sierra nevada," and thus was the Sierra Nevada named.<sup>2</sup>

Serious exploration of the forty-to-eighty mile wide range waited almost another century, however, until the California legislature directed State Geologist Josiah Whitney to "make an accurate and complete Geological Survey of the state, and to furnish in his report of the same, proper maps and diagrams thereof. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The Whitney Survey team entered the Yosemite area in the season of 1863, and the next year moved south to the areas of the Kings, Kern, and San Joaquin rivers. During the summer of 1864, survey members William Brewer and James Gardner made the first ascent of 13,570-foot Mount Brewer (named after William Brewer, the chief assistant of the survey), a peak they thought to be the highest in the Sierra. From that point, however, the men discovered that they were:

*. . . not on the highest peak, although we were a thousand feet higher than we anticipated any peaks were. The view was yet wilder than we have ever seen before. Such a landscape! A hundred*

*peaks in sight over thirteen thousand feet—many very sharp—deep canyons, cliffs in every direction almost rivaling Yosemite, sharp ridges almost inaccessible to man, on which human foot has never trod—all combined to produce a view the sublimity of which is rarely equaled, one which few are privileged to behold.*<sup>4</sup>

It was a mountaineer's dream. The three highest peaks were named, in descending order of altitude, Mount Whitney (after the leader of the survey), Mount Williamson (after Major Robert S. Williamson of the U.S. Engineers who was in charge of the Pacific Railroad Survey), and Mount Tyndall (after John Tyndall, an English physicist, philosopher, and mountaineer). After this first sighting, two other members of the survey, Clarence King, who would become the first head of the U.S. Geological Survey, and Dick Cotter, the survey's packer, unsuccessfully attempted to ascend the highest peak, 14,494-foot Mount Whitney.<sup>5</sup>

In 1873, three fishermen from the nearby town of Lone Pine, Charley Begole, Johnny Lucas, and Al Johnson, claimed to have made the first ascent of Mount Whitney, which they named "Fisherman's Peak." After considerable controversy during the same year about who really made the first ascent and what the peak's official name should be, the "Immortal Three," as the fishermen became known, received credit, but Mount Whitney remained the peak's official name.

Following the Whitney Survey, most of the Sierra still remained unexplored, and most of the peaks remained unclimbed. Sufficient time was

probably the prime requirement for a serious Sierra mountaineer in this era because there were no automobiles and no roads into the mountains. Excursions frequently took weeks or months and covered hundreds of miles. Most Sierra mountaineers of this early period were professors, teachers, lawyers, or other professional people who could arrange long summer vacations.

Most mountaineers traveled in groups with the assistance of pack animals because of the weight of provisions and equipment. An exception to this rule was John Muir, who usually traveled alone and took only what he could carry with him. During his first attempt to climb Mount Whitney in 1873, he spent the night below the summit dancing in his shirt sleeves to keep from freezing. Of that night, he later said, "The view of the stars and of the dawn on the desert was abundant compensation for all that."<sup>6</sup> Returning to his base in Independence, he started again on foot two days later and on the third day reached the summit.

In Muir's day, specialized equipment, if it was even carried, consisted of hob-nailed boots and perhaps an ice-axe. A climbing rope might also be used, but, unlike today's nylon ropes that stretch considerably before breaking (and thereby absorb the shock of a fall), ropes were made of hemp which simply breaks under stress. These hemp ropes might also have been utilized to lead the animals and tie equipment on their backs. The main function of the rope was psychological protection. For example, when King and Cotter were returning from their first ascent of Mount Tyndall in 1864, Cotter climbed out of

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sight and lowered the rope to King, saying, "Don't be afraid to bear your weight." After a difficult climb, King reached Cotter, who was:

*sitting upon a smooth, roof-like slope where the least pull would have dragged him over the brink. He had no brace for his feet, nor hold for his hands, but had seated himself calmly, with a rope tied around his breast, knowing that my only safety lay in being able to make the climb entirely unaided; certain that the least waver in his tone would have disheartened me, and perhaps made it impossible. . . . To coolly seat one's self in the door of death, and silently listen for the fatal summons, . . . requires as sublime a type of courage as I know.*

Climbing rope could have other uses. Stanford University professor Bolton Coit Brown first ascended Mount Clarence King's summit spire with the aid of his ingenuity and his rope. This ascent has been labeled "the finest Sierra climb of the nineteenth century."<sup>8</sup> His account:

*Poised on a narrow ledge, I noosed the rope and lassoed a horn of rock projecting over the edge of the smooth-faced precipice overhead. But the pull on the rope toppled the rock bodily over, nearly hitting me, who could not dodge. So I took out the noose, and having tied a big knot in the rope-end, I threw it repeatedly until this caught in a crack. Then I climbed the rope. I did not dally with the job either. . . . The ugliest place of all was exactly at the last rock, only a few feet from the top. With great caution, and as much deliberation as I had used speed below, I finally looped the rope over an all too slight projection, along the upper edge of the side face of the topmost block, and compelled myself to put one foot in it and lift myself, and so stand, dangling in that precarious sling, until I could set my arms over the top and squirm over.<sup>9</sup>*

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While the Sierra is large and the number of nineteenth-century mountaineers was small, smaller still was the number of female mountaineers. The nineteenth-century woman mountaineer needed not only courage with which to face the unknown, but inner strength to go against social convention. Some male mountaineers were more liberal than the times, but as Helen Gompertz LeConte, one of the most proficient and active mountaineers of her time, recalled, this increased the pressure on women to perform:

*No greater difficulty had we met than an incredibly steep trail into the canyon, but now the angry, foam-flecked river made the men look grave, and the women*

*The Whitney Survey Team included (from left) James T. Gardner, Richard Cotter, William Brewer, & Clarence King, who became first head of the U.S. Geological Survey. With packer Cotter, King unsuccessfully attempted to ascend Mt. Whitney in 1864.*

*silently shiver at the thought of daring to cross it. I say 'silently,' for we were old campers and knew better than to cry before we were hurt. Besides, there was a pride and sense of responsibility in the fact that we were looked upon as comrades by the men, and we must in no wise fall below the standard by increasing their anxieties.<sup>10</sup>*

There were many things that made it difficult for pioneering female mountaineers to be on an equal basis with men. Most men, for many reasons, felt that women

should be treated differently, even in the mountains. For example, on the first Sierra Club Outing in 1901, it was recommended that: "Women should have one durable waist [blouse] for tramping and one light one for wearing around camp. The skirt can be short, not more than halfway from knee to ankle, and under these can be worn shorter dark-colored bloomers."<sup>11</sup> Men had no clothing regulations. Yet, considering the society as a whole, these restrictions were very libertarian. During the second Sierra Club Outing in 1902, Mrs. LeConte reported: "Having for many seasons withstood the surprised gaze of the gaily gownned hotel guests all by myself, I was delighted to have the tables turned and see short skirts and hob-nailed boots look askance at trailing garments."<sup>12</sup>

**T**wenty-three years prior to the first Sierra Club Outing, pioneering woman mountaineer Anna Mills joined a party from Porterville in Tulare County whose primary goal was to climb Mount Whitney. The group's secondary goal was to put the first women on the summit of the highest peak in the continental United States. Through Mills' fortitude, and that of her three other female companions, both of these goals were realized. Although they probably did not realize it at the time, these four were the first women on record to climb above 14,000 feet in the United States.

Well-known during her lifetime, Anna Mills is an obscure figure today. Most of what is known appears in her obituary, which reads: "Born in New York in 1854, she

moved to California in 1877, where she worked as a school teacher in various schools throughout Tulare County, and took a prominent part in all educational matters throughout her life. She married Robert Johnston and helped raise a stepson, Fred. She traveled extensively and frequently gave of her store of knowledge in lectures before clubs, literary entertainments, and benefits in many towns of the valley. She was very active in the Order of the Eastern Star and was a member of the board of directors of the Visalia Music Club and was responsible in a large degree for the success of the organization."<sup>13</sup> Her outstanding collection of Indian baskets is still maintained in the Tulare County Library. She was also the first vice-president of the short-lived Mt. Whitney Club, the main purpose of which was "to aid in making Mt. Whitney—the crown of the Sierra—and the adjacent mountain region better known to the world." Membership was restricted to individuals who had climbed Mount Whitney.<sup>14</sup>

In 1881, three years after Anna Mills' ascent, a party led by William Wallace, who would become a superior court judge, spent the night on the summit of Mount Whitney. Sharing the peak with them were members of the Langley Party, which included William Crapo, who had also been the guide who led the Mills party.<sup>15</sup> James W.A. Wright, a member of the Wallace party, relates: "Mr. Crapo so impressed us with his account of the heroic perseverances of Miss Mills to make the ascent, she being partially crippled, that we named a peak Mount Mills in her honor."<sup>16</sup> Wallace continues: "It was undecided which peak to name for her, but the final selection

was a long, high peak just south of Loomis Cañon and about four miles south of Mt. Guyot."<sup>17</sup>

At the present time, an effort is being made to have this peak officially named Mount Anna Mills, since there is already a Mount Mills located in the Abbot group farther north. A decision by the National and State Boards on Geographic Names is pending.

**T**he following account by Anna Mills of her ascent of Mount Whitney appeared in 1902 in the *Mt. Whitney Club Journal*, the official publication of the Mt. Whitney Club.

While it can be argued that people climb mountains for many different reasons, it appears, that there may be one major reason. It was described in 1900 by Lincoln Hutchinson, a member of a party which intended to make the first ascent of Matterhorn Peak in the Sierra. When they arrived in the unknown area, they had to decide which of two peaks was the Matterhorn and, also, which peak they should climb. Hutchinson reports: "After a long council of war, our decision was made. We had come for glory; our attack should be directed against the peak which was highest and apparently the most difficult of ascent."<sup>18</sup>

There are, however, two different types of glory. One is external and gives an individual recognition from others; the other is internal and gives an individual recognition from within. For this reason, most mountaineers—and Anna Mills was no exception—write their accounts in a flowery, flamboyant style in an attempt to convey to their readers the glory, along with the pure joy and exhilaration, of mountaineering. □





**T**he summer of 1878 is memorable to many of the old settlers as one of excursions to the various mountain resorts of Tulare County. While it was yet winter a party from Porterville and vicinity was formed and plans were made during the next few months. As no ladies had yet made the ascent of the real Mt. Whitney, we determined to be the first to stand on its lofty summit. So anxious was I to begin climbing, that I left Porterville two weeks ahead of the party, going as far as Dillon's Mill. There I spent two weeks peering into Nature's beauties, enjoying the invigorating mountain air and the breath of the pines, which seemed to put new blood into my veins, and nothing in the way of climbing or walking did I consider too difficult to undertake.

One pleasant afternoon in early July, the Porterville party, consisting of Judge R. C. Redd and wife, and two sons, George and Robert, Miss Hope Broughton, Miss Mary Martin, N. B. Martin, and Henry E. Ford, arrived at the mill. Soon all was in readiness, and we started on our journey, traveling four miles through a dense forest of redwood, pine, and fir, when we camped on

a little stream. Resuming our journey in the morning, we traveled in an easterly direction through a wild and picturesque country. Higher, higher up we went, and soon began the ascent of Chisel Mountain, one of the loftiest peaks in that section. The ascent required considerable time, and called into requisition the strength of both man and beast.

The surpassing beauty of the view from that peak will always remain with me. In front, and seemingly at our feet, lay Tulare Valley, with its broad lake stretched out before us. The course of Tulare River, Deer Creek, Outside Creek, and various other streams, with their valleys dotted with grain-fields, orchards, and vineyards, could plainly be traced. On either side and behind us peak after peak towered one above the other, some composed of barren rocks and crowned in snow, while others were clothed in living green from base to summit.

We continued our course over a rough mountain-side without any trail, and descended a steep and rocky cliff into a pretty little valley, where we remained two days, feasting on trout. We traveled from here without any trail, over precipi-

*Nineteenth-century mountaineers approached the Sierra on trails, not roads, and traveled in groups with pack animals who bore the weight of equipment and provisions for several weeks of camping.*

tous mountains, down to Little Kern, along which we journeyed for many miles, sometimes high on the mountain-side and sometimes along the margin of the stream. During the day we saw a deer, but did not succeed in getting him. The sun was still high in the heavens when we reached the sheep-camp of Martin Click, who presented us with a fat mutton ready dressed. (I might add that several years later, Mr. Click married the belle of our party, Miss Hope Broughton.) Crossing Little Kern, we camped for the night on the edge of a flower-decked meadow, hid away amid barren hills. Getting an early start, we crossed a long mountain range with trail scarcely visible. This is the dividing ridge between Little and Big Kern.

Our next camping-place was Trout Meadows, where we spent several pleasant days resting, hunting, and fishing. After making a short side trip to Big Kern Flat on Big Kern River, we pursued a



northerly course for about two miles, when we struck the Hockett trail. We were headed for Kern Lakes—and such a rough, rocky, and precipitous trail as we had to pass over! The scenery is grand, and has only to be seen to be appreciated. Lofty mountain-peaks in every direction tower thousands of feet towards the blue heavens, seeming to say that there is something still grander beyond. While wending our way high upon the mountain-side, we saw far below a precipice, over which the water madly rushed, seeking repose in a granite basin a hundred feet below. And Big Kern, with its wealth of ice-cold waters, dashing and foaming over its rocky bed, leaping cataracts, bounding through gaps and gorges, madly pressed its way to the valley below. Words fail to express the joy we felt when we reached the summit and looked down upon Little Kern Lake, a miniature of beauty, nestled so closely to the base of the mountain, as if seeking protection. For a long time we watched the varied reflections in its quiet waters, forgetting for the time the dangerous trail to be traversed before reaching it. As the mountain was so steep, for the

first time we dismounted, considering ourselves safer on foot than on horseback. It was not necessary, however, to do much walking. We just slid.

The little lake is circular in form, and at that time its border was free from tules. The larger lake was oblong, and presented an unsightly appearance, many dead trees and rotten logs lying in its limpid waters. On this lake were several small boats, each manned by two fishermen, who were supplying the Owens River country with trout. We camped at the lower end of Runkle's pasture, near a soda spring, about two and one-half miles above the lakes. We found there over thirty people from various parts of Inyo County—as jolly a crowd as one would wish to meet. Pleasant indeed were the evenings spent around the camp-fire, and the excursions made to the various points of interest. Parties making hurried trips to Mt. Whitney and vicinity lose half the pleasure of the outing by not making these side excursions, as many of the most interesting places are off from the main trails. We visited the falls of Volcano (or Whitney) Creek. The lower, about a mile east of our camp

at the spring, consists of two falls, the first leap being about eighty feet, and the second sixty, terminating in a fine spray, which swayed to and fro in the breeze like an immense white veil. The constant fall of water has worn into the rock a basin, where we found curiously shaped pieces of wood and bark, worn as smooth as glass by the action of the water. The upper fall, a mile still farther east, or a little north of east, is still grander than the lower, having an unbroken descent of over a hundred feet. Between these two falls we caught the largest trout, some of them measuring fifteen inches. Right here I wish to express my sentiments regarding what I consider an act of vandalism perpetrated by the Board of Supervisors of Tulare County in 1883, in granting a franchise allowing the diversion of the waters of this most beautiful stream into Ramshaw Creek, thereby ruining falls which in many respects rival those of Yosemite. This stream was the real home of the golden trout, and between the falls they grew to an enormous size, reaching a length of from fourteen to sixteen inches. But along comes the water-shark, and, aided and abetted by a Board of Supervisors,





destroys that which lovers of the beautiful have come thousands of miles to see, and the destruction of which benefits few.

William Crapo, of Cerro Gordo, to whom Clarence King gives the honor of being the first man to stand on the summit of Mt. Whitney, was so delighted to learn that we ladies were going to undertake what was then considered a most hazardous climb, that he offered his services as guide, saying that he wished to have the honor of leading the first party of ladies to the top of the United States.

On the morning of August 1st, in company with Luther Anderson, of Porterville, Kit Carson Johnson, and "Prof. Crapo," as we called him, amid cheers of "Godspeed" from the crowd at the spring, we were off for Mt. Whitney. Following the Hockett trail, we forded the river and climbed a steep and very high mountain. After crossing the summit, we traveled with difficulty over angular lava rocks for quite a distance, when we came to Whitney Creek. Continuing our journey, we crossed a branch of this creek on a natural bridge some ten or twelve feet wide. A little farther on, after attaining the summit, we passed

what seemed to be an extinct volcano having a funnel-shaped edge. The whole country shows the effect of volcanic action, several of the mountains being extinct volcanoes. Leaving the Hockett trail near a cinder mountain, and turning to the left, we continued our course in a northeasterly direction up Whitney Creek, over rough and nearly impassable mountains, through dense forests of tamarack. This stream literally swarmed with golden trout. So numerous were they that we could almost catch them with our hands. Still following the creek for some distance, we turned to the right, passing up a mountain of no great altitude, and began the descent into a most singular-looking valley. My feelings when it flashed into view would be hard to describe. Here the scene changed from grand to sublime; here appeared the loftiest mountains we had yet seen.

This desert, or vast plain of sand, called by some an extinct or dry lake, is locked in on all sides by rock-ribbed mountains whose peaks mount upward among the clouds. One could imagine himself descending into the valley of death and having the gates closed after

*(Left) Pack-mule trains loaded with cumbersome camping gear and food made it possible for mountaineering parties to explore remote Sierra peaks.*

*As early as the 1860s California men and women camped in the wilderness for pleasure, not out of necessity.*

him.<sup>19</sup> We crossed another mountain and lake-bed of like character, leaving old Mt. Whitney, or Sheep Mountain, several miles to the right, and descended into a meadow, where we camped for the night.

Soon after sunrise on the following morning we were pressing our way over a boggy meadow and along the stream upon which we camped the night before. Then, turning north, we wended our way up a steep and rocky mountain without any trail. It was with difficulty that we gained the summit, having to pass over places where the space between us and eternity could be measured by inches. Still pressing our way over mountains and through boggy meadows, we came to an impassable wall of rock, and were obliged to turn back. We then descended a cliff to the edge of a most beautiful lake, the waters of which were so clear that objects could be plainly seen on the bottom. Added to this were the

reflections of the pink-tipped peaks and cloud-flecked sky, making a scene of rare beauty. Although quite deep, none of the lakes or streams in that locality contain any fish. Slowly we followed the margin of this lake for quite a distance, admiring the beautiful pictures in its quiet waters, then climbed a rocky cliff, making camp about a quarter of a mile from the summit on the opposite side. We were then in full view and about a mile south of what some call Fisherman's Peak, but what Clarence King describes as Mt. Whitney. In appearance it is oblong, having a gap on either side between it and other mountains of nearly equal magnitude.

A short distance east of our camp was a ledge of rocks over one hundred feet high. Along the ridge can be distinctly traced the effect of glacial action, the rocky slopes in many places being worn as smooth as a mirror. Here the books of Nature are open, and on every page is written the handiwork of the Infinite. Here is presented a world of food for thought, and it can be truly said "the half has never yet been told."

Just before reaching camp my horse took a notion to jump over a small stream, very unexpectedly to me, and my back was so severely injured that I could hardly step without experiencing severe pain. Having been lame from early childhood, everybody said it would be utterly impossible for me to climb to the summit of Mt. Whitney. But I was not easily discouraged, and had always held to the idea that I could do what other people could—my surplus of determination making up for what I lacked in the power of locomotion. But now at the eleventh hour, with the Mecca to which I had so long been journeying in full view, to have such a calamity befall me was more than I could bear, and I

gave vent to my feelings in tears. Like Moses, I had gotten where I could see the promised land, but the chances for getting there were indeed few. For a long time success or failure seemed to hang in the balance. Never before had I experienced such a profound feeling of disappointment. In that hour of anguish I remembered my sins, and carefully walking to an obscure place, away up there so near heaven, where none but God could hear, I knelt, facing the great mountain, and prayed—prayed as I had not for years; prayed with the spirit and the understanding also. When I had finished the mountain-top seemed closer, and I returned to camp with a much lighter heart.

I did not care for supper, neither did I care to join the party in a game of snowball on a huge snow-bank near by. Rest was what I wanted; so I retired early, and Mrs. Redd bathed my back with "Seven Seals, or Golden Wonder."<sup>20</sup> I thought if a little was good a good deal would be better, and insisted on "gettin' plenty while I was gettin'." During the night I learned where the "Golden Wonder" came in. Such a blister! The wonder to me was that I had any back left. At peep of day I was up and glad to find that the pain had nearly gone. Eating a hurried breakfast, I started alone, soon after five o'clock, for Guitar Lake, where I was to rest and wait for the other members of the party. Climbing over those rocks was no easy task—and how my back did smart and burn! But I didn't mind such trifles when there was so much at stake; my heart was set on something higher, and nothing short of the highest point would satisfy me. I would reach that and die if need be.

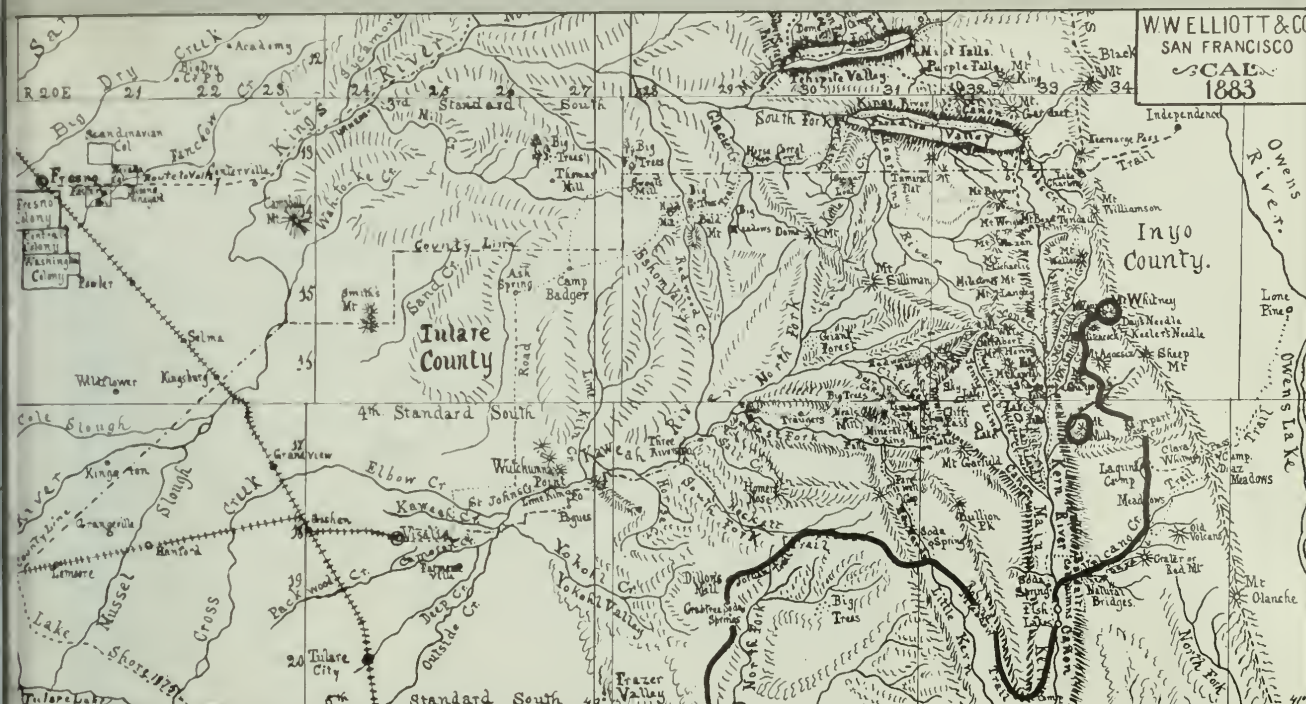
By the time the crowd arrived I was somewhat rested, and we began the ascent of what is called

the "Devil's Ladder," which is nearly perpendicular for a distance of about a quarter of a mile, and from forty to fifty feet wide. Emerging from this, we paused to rest and drink in the far-sighted view. Nestled close to the base of the opposite mountains were many pretty lakelets, and the peaks which before looked so high began to assume smaller proportions. The shapes of the rocks, too, were changed; instead of being oval, like those in the crevices below, they were angular in shape, many of them being very large. Up over these we had to crawl, or leap from one to another. The exertion of climbing, together with the lightness of the air, made breathing difficult. We passed over the snow-belt, about an eighth of a mile through, with ease, and from there on had no trouble in gaining the summit.

Walking over to the monument, we planted the Stars and Stripes on its topmost point (I doubt if "Old Glory" ever waved from a grander flagstaff); then we sang the "Star-Spangled Banner" and "Nearer, My God, to Thee." The acoustic properties being so perfect, we sang with ease, notwithstanding the lightness of the air.

The supreme joy I felt when I realized that my prayer had been answered, and that I was at last really standing on the summit of Mt. Whitney, knew no bounds. For the time being I forgot that I ever was tired; one glance was enough to compensate for all the trials of the trip. The day was perfect, and so were the surroundings. How strange it seemed to be standing on the highest point in the United States, and looking off for a distance of seventy miles down into Death Valley, the lowest point! How strange, too, it seemed, after spending so many weeks in the





mountains, to look up and see nothing but the blue-vaulted heavens! Oh, what an inspiration it was to look from that magnificent peak on the grand panorama of mountains, reaching from beyond the Yosemite to San Bernardino! Range after range in every direction, peak on peak, comprising almost limitless forms, rise one above the other, each striving for the mastery. Stepping near the eastern edge, I looked down a sheer descent of three thousand feet on a small lakelet, partially covered with snow and ice. Still farther east lay Owens River Valley, with its sparkling lake, winding river, and golden fields of grain. Every road and trail could be plainly seen, and, looking through the glasses, we could see the buildings at Lone Pine and Independence.

After feasting for several hours on the glory of our surroundings, we returned to the monument, where we examined the records of Clarence King, Lieutenant Wheeler and party,<sup>21</sup> and others. We found recorded there the names of several people from Inyo County and a number from the Eastern States, but only one Tularean—Frank Knowles, who accompanied King on his first

trip. We also found several pieces of silver money, but I have heard it hinted that none of it has been seen since our party left! After placing our record in the monument, we very reluctantly took a last lingering look, then descended the mountain, reaching camp just before sunset.

Early the following morning we turned our faces homeward, traveling over an unknown route, rough in the extreme, towards the headwaters of Kern River. Before the sun was very high we came in sight of the river about four miles below us, but how to get there was the puzzling question. It seemed almost impossible. But we were accustomed to overcoming difficulties, and did not propose to give up at this stage of the game. All hands dismounted and took it on foot down the mountain, over rocks, through brush, and up cliffs, which seemed impassable for an animal (or an Anna Mills) to travel over. After trying several routes, and being compelled each time to turn back on account of precipitous bluffs and impassable streams, we at last found a pass and descended to the river, where we camped for the night.

We made the rest of our trip home

*A High Sierra map drawn in 1883 shows Mt. (Anna) Mills several peaks to the south of Mt. Whitney (below Inyo County label). Stanford University Libraries*

by way of Kern River Cañon, Soda Springs, and Dillon's Mills, arriving at Porterville on the evening of August 9th.

To me it seems that the grandest mountain scenery in this State is Kern River Cañon.

In conclusion, let me say that since my visit to Mt. Whitney, nearly a quarter of a century ago, it has been my privilege to visit the various mountain regions in this country from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Alaska to the Rio Grande, and to scale the volcanic mountains of Hawaii. I have also crossed the watershed of the Bavarian Alps, traversed the Austrian Tyrol, visited the German, Italian, and Swiss Alps, and gazed with admiration on the beauties of the Matterhorn and Jungfrau. Yet I can candidly say that I have never seen, nor do I ever expect to see, a picture so varied, so sublime, so awe-inspiring, as that seen from the summit of Mt. Whitney on the third day of August 1878.<sup>22</sup> □

(See page 76 for notes.)

# THE FIFTH CLASS

## A 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY FORERUNNER OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

In 1870 the new University of California augmented its tiny student body with Hispanics

by David J. León and Daniel McNeill



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**A**ffirmative action in higher education seems a recent means to a modern goal. Colleges offer special admissions and tuition policies to minorities in order to encourage their enrollment and compensate for past discrimination. These programs have had far-reaching impact. For instance, minority students were virtually absent from the University of California until the introduction of affirmative action about two decades ago.<sup>1</sup>

Most people are surprised to learn that as early as 1870 the University of California experimented with an enrollment program with similarities to affirmative action: the Fifth Class. The Fifth Class was a preparatory department or adjunct beneath the Fourth (or freshman) Class which helped individuals study for and pass the university entrance exam. Preparatory departments were common in the age before widespread public education, and many schools—Columbia University, Illinois College, and Pomona College, among others—used them to help boost enrollment and raise needed revenues.<sup>2</sup> The Fifth Class

*Class size at the new tuition-free University of California remained small despite its modern, science-oriented curriculum. Joseph LeConte is shown lecturing to fifteen young men in this 1874 photograph by Eadweard Muybridge.*

was thus a precursor of affirmative action rather than a lineal ancestor. Although it was created to augment the student body overall rather than to aid minorities in particular, it offered regulations tantamount to special admissions and tuition for Hispanics, and thus bears genuine resemblance to present-day affirmative action. The Fifth Class was also controversial. Its birth involved a marathon struggle, yet its success was unqualified. When the University's Regents terminated the popular program after two short years, minority enrollment nearly ceased.

The Fifth Class began as the preparatory department of the immediate predecessor of the University of California, the private College of California. The college was located in Oakland, on the property bounded by Harrison, Franklin, Twelfth, and Fourteenth streets, now part of downtown. Its preparatory department, the College School, occupied Brayton Hall and



boasted "well-ventilated and warm" schoolrooms, dormitories, a gymnasium, and spacious playgrounds.<sup>1</sup> Because the college entrance exam stressed mastery of the ancient classics, preparatory pupils spent their time with such works as Xenophon's *Anabasis* and Caesar's *Commentaries*. In 1867–68, the College School enrolled 301 students while the College of California itself had but 21, a reflection of just how difficult the examination was.

Of the 301 preparatory school pupils, 30 or almost ten percent were Spanish-surnamed, a greater proportion of Hispanics than inhabited the state. The school in fact recruited them. For instance, a newspaper advertisement in Spanish listed instructors and costs, described facilities, and extolled the school's virtues: "Su situación central, accesible, saludable y hermosa en su escena natural, presenta grandes ventajas morales y sociales." ("Its central, accessible, healthful, and attractive location, in a natural setting, offers great moral and social advantages.")<sup>2</sup>

In contrast to California's other minorities at this time, Hispanics were well-placed to avail themselves of this preparatory department. While blacks, Chinese, and Indians were restricted to inferior, segregated primary schools, Hispanic pupils were allowed into white classrooms and could thus profit from better funding, staffing, and curricula. Furthermore, although many Hispanics had been disenfranchised of their wealth and land over the years, some retained sufficient capital to support children at college. They maintained an interest in culture, and their numbers at the College School made possible

a Spanish literary society, the Sociedad Literaria Castellana de California.<sup>3</sup>

**I**n the fall of 1869, the University of California opened its doors on the physical site of the former college. At the same time it severed its link with the College School. The school, however, remained in existence across the street as a private academy and tried to hint brightly at affiliation with the university by adopting a new name: the State University School. The number of Hispanic students in 1869–70 grew to 36 out of 327, about eleven per cent, and some were among the most prominent members of the class.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, the university had a problem. Though it was tuition-free and offered a modern science-oriented curriculum, it had enrolled only forty students, far too few to rank it among the most prestigious schools in the country. Harvard and Cornell had student populations in the hundreds at this time, and many Californians wished their new university to keep pace.<sup>5</sup> Small enrollment also betrayed the school's mandate as a public university to educate the populace and catalyze economic growth in the state.

The California state school system could not supply enough qualified students, for it was inchoate in 1870. Though the state maintained public schools, attendance was not compulsory, and absenteeism was estimated at forty per cent. Of the nine high schools in California—in San Francisco, Sacramento, Nevada City, San José, Grass Valley, Vallejo, Oakland, Santa Clara, and Stockton—the latter four were less than

three years old, and Santa Clara was not fully operational until as late as 1873. Several private academies offered alternative instruction, but their caliber varied widely.<sup>6</sup>

A preparatory department thus seemed desirable. In December 1869, the Regents requested the California legislature for funds and authority to create such a department. The legislature promptly complied. The Regents then passed the *fait accompli* to the faculty for its approval, and a power struggle ensued which would help define the relationship of Regents to faculty for decades to come.

The Regents first asked the faculty if it thought a preparatory department expedient and, if so, how it should be organized. Despite state authorization and monies, on January 17, 1870, the faculty responded that a preparatory department would not be expedient. Professor John LeConte, acting president of the university, explained this position. A preparatory department could only be a stopgap, he said, since the ultimate goal was a functional network of high schools throughout the state. But such a stopgap was unnecessary in any case, he went on, since the state could build up its high school system as quickly as the university could organize a preparatory department. This questionable contention was not rendered any more plausible by the presence of the State University School right across the street. In essence, a preparatory department already existed.<sup>7</sup>

The Regents did not retreat. In April, they ordered the faculty to devise a structural framework to "bring the different University Schools in direct relation with the Grammar

Schools of the State."<sup>10</sup> The Academic Senate responded grudgingly. It issued a set of principles holding that a preparatory department was in fact expedient, but that it should be temporary and should not lower admissions standards. Its pupils should be at least fifteen, and any allocation of funds should await evaluation of the department's needs. Throughout the spring and into the summer of 1870, the Regents waited for the practical plan they had requested. None was forthcoming.

On August 16, the Regents elected Henry Durant president of the university. Although neither first nor second choice for the post, he was nonetheless an apt selection because he was intensely committed to making the university a great public institution. He had taught in Oakland since 1853, first at his Contra Costa Boys Academy and later at the College of California, and he was a strong advocate of transforming the State University School into a preparatory department.<sup>11</sup>

The faculty, however, ignored the significance of this appointment. Soon after, Regent John W. Dwinelle decided to address the faculty in person. Author of the university's Or-



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ganic Act of 1868 and a prominent San Francisco attorney, Dwinelle had championed universal education and from 1872 to 1874 had represented the black community in *Ward v. Flood*, its challenge to the constitutionality of California's segregated schools. Dwinelle brought all his stature to bear on the faculty, reminding professors that the state needed desperately to popularize the university and that the Regents therefore wanted a preparatory department. When he finished, the Academic Senate voted to start one. The Fifth Class had come formally into being.

But with fall term less than a month away, the faculty had still done nothing to organize the Fifth Class. Unwilling to endure further procrastination, the Regents' Committee on Instruction, made up of Dwinelle, John Hager, Richard Hammond, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Oscar P. Fitzgerald, took the initiative and decided fundamental matters such as class hours and attendance policy. The Committee set Fifth Class entrance exams for September 21 and 22, and again at a later date, for applicants inconvenienced by the short notice.<sup>12</sup>

The Regents appointed George Tait of the State University School as Master of the Fifth Class. In addition to teaching and supervising, Tait agreed to recruit pupils, house

*The preparatory department of the University of California's predecessor, the College of California (above), groomed students to master the ancient classics. Far from Athens, the school's home, Oakland, offered aspiring students only unpaved streets and wooden sidewalks (right view: at 14th and Broadway c. 1869).*

them at the school for \$30 per month, furnish academic aid to boarders in the evenings, and find competent instructors in the modern languages. In return, he received \$250 per month. (In this era, apothecaries earned about \$40, butchers about \$35, and undertakers about \$80 per month. University professors, however, made between \$200 and \$300.) Tait assured the Regents that the engagement could end "whenever your Honorable Body shall determine that the Fifth Class is not flourishing, but is, on the contrary, an incubus on the University."<sup>13</sup>

The Class had certain policies which encouraged Hispanic enrollment and resembled affirmative action. One involved tuition. Unlike the university, the Fifth Class charged a tuition of \$4 per month, but the faculty could waive this fee if a pupil lacked funds or the chance to obtain a free public education elsewhere. In March 1871, for instance, six young men entered the university in this way. The disadvantaged thus had access to a rudimentary form of financial aid.

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Another key feature involved admissions. In December 1870, the Regents eliminated the exam requirement for individuals from outside California.<sup>14</sup> Since Mexicans preponderated among the out-of-staters, this measure had the effect of recognizing their crucial need to master a second language. The Fifth Class thus showed special flexibility toward persons who might otherwise have more difficulty entering the university because of poverty, lack of access to free schools, or non-Anglo cultural background.

Hispanics made up a significant portion of the first Fifth Class in 1870–71. Of its eighty-eight pupils, sixteen, or almost twenty per cent, had Spanish surnames. Of these sixteen, twelve had attended the State University School the year before, a factor which may have mitigated the effects of the class's sudden inception. There were twelve Mexican students, all but two of whom had come from the nearby regions of Sonora and Baja California.

The four remaining Hispanics were Chicanos. They bore the names of some of the most illustrious Californio families: Fred Alvarado, San Diego; M. Moreno, San Diego; Ynes Pacheco, Pachecoville (Pacheco); and B.J. Peralta, Fruit

Vale (Oakland). Juan Bautista Alvarado had been governor of California under Mexican rule, when he had possessed vast tracts of land.<sup>15</sup> The Pachecos had long been active in California politics, and Romualdo Pacheco, elected lieutenant-governor in 1871, served briefly as governor in 1875. The Peraltas once owned the very ground beneath Berkeley, Alameda, and Oakland, but squatters, confidence men, and lawyers slowly reduced their holdings to tiny plots. (Lawsuits over the Peralta land did not end until 1910.)

The university itself enrolled but seventy-eight individuals in 1870–71, and only one was a minority. He was Manuel Corella, a part-time student from Tenuris, Sonora, who resided in Oakland. In addition to studying in the university, Corella taught Spanish to the Fifth Class from as early as January 1871, to judge from a bill he later submitted to the Regents.<sup>16</sup> In the fall of 1872, he became instructor of Spanish in the university, the first minority ever to teach there. He was apparently a member of the class of 1874, and attended a graduation party in June where he offered a toast to the ladies. But after that date Corella drops from university records. Of thirteen persons to graduate in the

year 1874, none was a minority.

Like most boarding schools, the Fifth Class had a paternalistic atmosphere, and its pupils, or "Fifers," led lives of regimentation. They arose around 7 A.M., donned military-style uniforms designed for them by two professors who were alumni of West Point, and then ate breakfast in the dining hall. The quality of its food was apparently a conversation piece. "Shout for joy, O ye 'Fifers'!" the University *Echo* cried in hallelujah when the dining services finally shut down.<sup>17</sup>

The pupils attended classes from 9 A.M. to noon and from 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. They had to study at least one foreign language from among Latin, Greek, French, German, and Spanish. The mathematics department offered a progressive sequence of courses in arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. The potpourri department of English, grammar, and history taught penmanship, reading, grammar, spelling, United States history, and ancient and modern geography.<sup>18</sup>

At the noon break and after 4 P.M., students could use the playground, but adventures beyond school boundaries were frowned upon. On February 3, 1871, the Academic Senate dismissed from the class five young Anglos who had "absented themselves, after sermonstrance." It is difficult to prove a connection, but at the same meeting the Senate resolved that faculty members had the duty "to report students found in public drinking-houses and billiard saloons."<sup>19</sup> Most of the boarders ended their day with after-dinner study, some under the special tutelage provided by Tait, until their bedtime at 9 or 10 P.M.

After the 1870–71 academic year,

many Fifth Class students took the university entrance exam. Of the eighty-eight enrolled, fifty-four passed and entered the freshman class for 1871–72. One was a Hispanic, Francisco Urriolagoitia, a Sonoran who lived in San Francisco. For reasons impossible to ascertain, Urriolagoitia requested an honorable dismissal that fall, and the Regents granted it on December 20, 1871.<sup>20</sup>

In its second year, 1870–71, Fifth Class enrollment jumped from 88 to 262,<sup>21</sup> probably because of greater public awareness of the program. The number of Hispanics, however, declined from sixteen to twelve. Four Mexican students and the two San Diegans, Alvarado and Moreno, had departed, to be replaced by three new pupils from the Bay Area: A. and M. Bernal of Pleasanton and E.A. Garrido of Walnut Creek. The Bernals also came from a notable Californio line.

As a preparatory institution, the Fifth Class succeeded splendidly, and thus it is surprising that the Regents disbanded it after only two years. The first intimation of trouble appeared in the summer of 1871, when George Tait requested \$1,590 from the Regents to cover student nonpayment of fees. An investigation commenced. On December 12, 1871, in a move which may have indicated a new attitude toward the Fifth Class, the Regents decided to close its "hash shop" or dining hall. When the Committee on Instruction finally reported to the Regents on the nonpayment problem on January 5, 1872, it recommended that fees be collected in advance.<sup>22</sup> This pragmatic solution should have ended all fear of student default, yet concerns about Fifth Class finances



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continued to surface for the six months left to it.

On April 30, 1872, Henry Durant, now age seventy, resigned as president of the university, and Daniel Coit Gilman was named as his successor. Though Durant's departure officially stemmed from ill health, he went on to serve two terms as Oakland's mayor before dying suddenly in the midst of a speech to a literary society. His resignation deprived the Fifth Class of a highly-placed benefactor at a critical time.

Events moved quickly. On May 24, 1872, the Regents requested the Committee on Instruction to look into the Fifth Class. On June 10, Regent Dwinelle formally asked the Academic Senate whether the class should be terminated. The faculty replied that it should continue for one more year, or for a shorter time if it failed to sustain itself financially. The June 10 meeting of the Senate, at which George Tait offered a financial accounting of the Fifth Class, was the last he would attend. He missed the next six in a row, and on July 23, 1872, he resigned.<sup>23</sup>

The abolition effort culminated at the Regents' meeting of July 16, 1872. The Committee on Instruction recommended ending the Fifth Class, and a resolution to this effect was introduced. Regent Samuel McKee countered with a motion that the Fifth Class continue under the direct control of the Academic Senate and that it collect all fees in ad-



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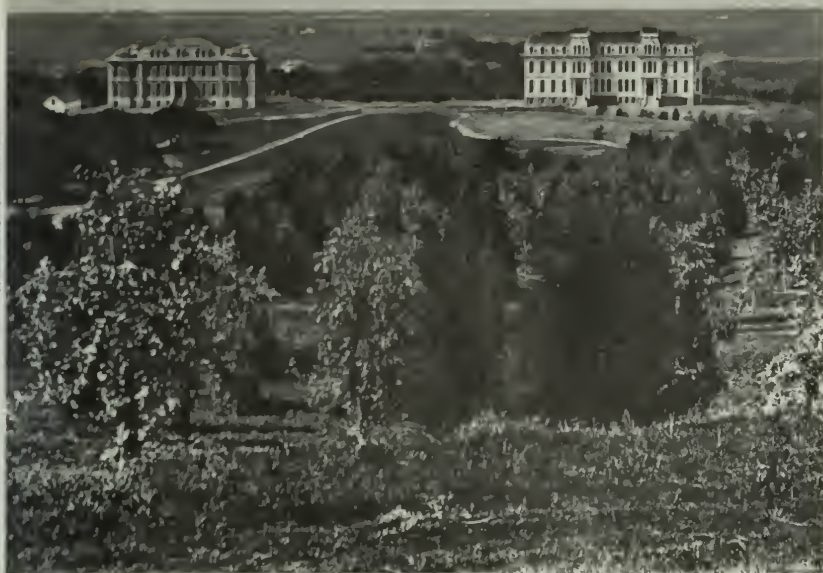
Regent John Dwinelle (left) urged the establishment of a Fifth Class, reminding professors that the state needed to popularize the university.

The university's only minority student in 1870–71 was Manuel Corella (right). He taught Spanish to the Fifth Class and became the university's first minority instructor. This latter proposal was defeated 8–6, and the original resolution to halt the program then passed.<sup>24</sup>

What inspired the Regents to shut the Fifth Class down after so short yet so productive a span? First, the Regents were a different body in 1872 than in 1870, when they created the Class. Durant had gone, and another Fifth Class advocate, Oscar Fitzgerald, had been defeated as superintendent of public instruction by Henry Bolander, an opponent of the Class.<sup>25</sup> Since these three men specialized in preparatory education and held important positions, they presumably wielded influence on the matter. But the difference in their votes alone could have saved the class.

There were underlying factors as well. From the outset, the university professors had reacted negatively to the class, probably because it increased their workload. They had already voiced objections to having to give evening lectures in San Francisco, and they did not assume their duties to the Fifth Class with enthusiasm. Their persisting expressions of irritation may eventually have made the class seem an an-





noyance to the Regents, who in any case had already proven their authority over the faculty by imposing it.

Moreover, the Regents planned to move the university to Berkeley in the fall of 1873 to the twin structures of North and South halls then being built beside Strawberry Creek. (South Hall still stands, near the buildings named for Dwinelle and LeConte.) The Regents had obtained specific grants from the legislature to fund this construction, and they may have balked at seeking even more money to house a swelling preparatory department. And while a Fifth Class across the street from the university was convenient, one located five miles away was not.

Finally, the very success of the Fifth Class may have abbreviated its career. The class had more students than the university and funneled many into it. But once university enrollment reached a certain level, administrators likely felt the Fifth Class had served its purpose. In addition, the preparatory school's great size may have embarrassed the university. Many individuals believed that the university should be both public and elite, theoretically open to all yet limited to the best, a circle of minds whose radiance would crown and proclaim the splendor of the Golden State. However, in 1871–72

*In 1874 the new Berkeley campus held (from left) South and North Hall. (Visible in the distance is Yerba Buena Island, the Golden Gate, and Marin County.)*

it resembled an institutional centaur: half high school, half university. The exemplar universities of the East—Harvard and Yale—did not teem with “Fifers,” and some thought the young University of California should not either, even if it had reason to.

**T**ermination had serious consequences for Hispanics. Those who did not pass the 1872 entrance exam obviously had to look elsewhere for instruction. While three Chicanos and four Mexicans did pass it and thereby earned the right to enter the freshman class of 1872–73, none chose to do so. Perhaps the university, growing apace and underwritten by the state, encouraged Hispanics less actively than such private colleges as the College of California, or perhaps Hispanics wanted an institution with a greater Spanish-speaking presence, such as one of the many local Catholic colleges. In any case, after they left, Manuel Corella again became the only Hispanic student on campus.

Abolition of the Fifth Class virtually halted the growth of the univer-

sity. Enrollment in 1872–73 was 185, up 22 from the 153 students of the previous year, and enrollment in 1873–74 was 191, up only 6 students.<sup>26</sup> The university had destroyed the public school system's ladder to its gates. Though primary schools became state-financed in 1874 and attendance was made compulsory, high schools remained unassisted and optional. By 1876, California had fifteen high schools, and by 1889, only twenty-one.<sup>27</sup> Not until 1891 did the legislature provide for the formation of county high school districts, and not until 1903 did the state offer to fund them through its taxes. University Professor of Agriculture Ezra Carr noted in 1875, “The lower stages of public education are yet imperfect and unorganized. To expect to have a great University without a good proportion of high schools . . . seems to me preposterous.”<sup>28</sup>

Obviously, the Fifth Class was not a genuine affirmative action program. It cultivated minorities as part of an effort to boost overall enrollment rather than as a goal in itself. Yet in its admissions and tuition policies and its successful induction of Hispanics into the university's sphere, the Fifth Class prefigured the thrust of affirmative action on campuses today. After its termination, minorities would not return to the university in significant numbers for almost a century. Not until 1964 and the Educational Opportunity Program—another realistic effort to “bring the different University Schools in direct relation with the Grammar Schools of the State”—did minorities begin to attend California's free, public university as a group.<sup>29</sup> □

(See page 77 for notes.)



by Arthur A. Hansen, Betty E. Mitson  
and Sue Kunitomi Embrey

# DISSIDENT HARRY UENO



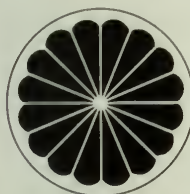
UENO COLLECTION



DOROTHEA LANGE 1942, WRA



## REMEMBERS MANZANAR



"Free Harry!" shouted Jimmy Nakamura in the riot scene of the 1976 television movie *Farewell to Manzanar*, the first

full-length cinematic treatment of the World War II evacuation of Japanese Americans.<sup>1</sup> The original riot on which the scene was based had occurred at the Manzanar camp in 1942 to protest what the internees regarded as the unjust arrest of a dissident cook named Harry Ueno. Nakamura, at age eighteen, had participated in the actual riot. Now, thirty-three years later, he was an actor in its dramatization on location at a prison near Oakland. In the movie, some of the names were changed, and Nakamura was supposed to chant "Free Joe!" but "with all the torches and the running of the mob," explained Nakamura, "I found myself shouting, 'Harry! Harry!' When the guns started firing, I felt the same terror. It really

*At age 11, American-born Harry Ueno attended school in Hiroshima, Japan.*

*Dust, intense heat, severe cold, and wind were daily fare for the 10,000 evacuees, most from Los Angeles County, held in Inyo County's Manzanar.*

hit me the next morning when I woke up. I cried for hours; the tears wouldn't stop."<sup>2</sup>

During the Second World War, more than 110,000 Japanese Americans, two-thirds of whom were American citizens, were evacuated from the West Coast by Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, commanding general of the Western Defense Command responsible for the area's security. Under the aegis of Executive Order 9066, issued on February 19, 1942, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the evacuated Japanese Americans, four-fifths of whom were from California, were incarcerated in ten hastily constructed relocation centers situated in America's barren hinterlands and administered by the War Relocation Authority (WRA). Both the evacuation and incarceration deviated from the American constitutional principle of due process of law and the nation's democratic commitment to fair and equal treatment of citizens and law-abiding aliens. But the government defended the measures as purportedly in the interest of the nation's internal security and the personal safety of the Japanese American population.

Probably the best known of the

camps, Manzanar and Tule Lake, were in California. (The remaining eight were distributed throughout the states of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming.) Manzanar, the first camp to be put into operation in March 1942, was located in the Owens Valley, bound on the west by the towering Sierra Nevada and on the east by the Inyo and White mountains. Some 225 miles northeast of Los Angeles between the two small Inyo County communities of Lone Pine and Independence, this camp housed 10,000 evacuees, chiefly from Los Angeles County. California's other camp, Tule Lake, was constructed upon a dry lake bed just south of Klamath Falls, Oregon, near the Modoc County hamlets of Newell and Tulelake. It was converted in the fall of 1943 to a segregation center chiefly for internees and their families designated "disloyal" on the basis of an ill-conceived and poorly administered loyalty questionnaire. In March 1946, Tule Lake was the last of the ten camps to close.

Despite the intervening years and the opening of previously sealed government records, it is little known that Americans in all ten

camps persistently resisted the conditions of their imprisonment. Internees regularly repudiated the government's Americanization program and experienced a resurgence in Japanese cultural values; they re-

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Betty E. Mitson is a free-lance oral historian/writer. A former director of the CSU-Fullerton Japanese American Oral History Project, she is the coauthor of two books treating the wartime evacuation experience of Japanese Americans—*Voices Long Silent: An Oral Inquiry into the Japanese American Evacuation* (1974) and *Valiant Odyssey: Herbert V. Nicholson In and Out of America's Concentration Camps* (1978).

Sue Kunitomi Embrey is the founding chairperson of the Manzanar Committee, which spearheaded a successful campaign to designate the site of the Manzanar War Relocation Center (where during World War II she was incarcerated and served as the editor of the *Manzanar Free-Press*) as a State Historical Landmark. Her publications include *The Lost Years: 1942–46* (1972).

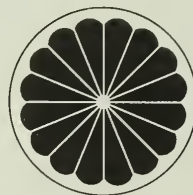
All three authors are currently involved in preparing a book-length publication about the experiences of Harry Ueno entitled *Manzanar Memoir*.



jected WRA-imposed political and economic bureaucracy while rejuvenating prewar Japanese patterns of community leadership; and they redeployed themselves from labor projects selected by camp administrators to those regarded valuable by internees. Because this type of resistance was daily and incremental, rather than occasional and dramatic, it has gone largely unnoticed.

More visible, both at the time and later, were displays by internees of open resistance such as strikes and riots. But most historians of this resistance have been preoccupied with illustrating its beneficial or baneful consequences for the present rather than first explaining the activities in the context of the times. The result is a distortion of historical reality. Historians have traditionally relied on written documents to disclose the past, but new and equally revealing documents can be generated through interviews with survivors who experienced, that is who participated in or observed, significant events such as riots and strikes.

One individual who experienced both a riot at Manzanar (in which he was a central figure) and a strike at Tule Lake (in which he was not involved) was the selfsame cook noted above, Harry Y. Ueno. Accordingly, under the aegis of the Japanese American Oral History Project at California State University, Fullerton, Sue Kunitomi Embrey, also a former internee at Manzanar, and Arthur A. Hansen interviewed Ueno, who is bilingual, at his home in San Jose about his key role in the Manzanar riot, one of the most renowned examples of internee resistance during the entire Japanese American Evacuation.



In the evening of December 5, 1942, some masked internees at the Manzanar War Relocation Center assaulted Fred

Tayama, a *Nisei* (American born), severely enough to hospitalize him. Camp authorities arrested thirty-five-year old Harry Ueno, a *Kibei* (a *Nisei* educated in Japan) who was head of the camp's Mess Hall Workers Union. Ueno had formed this group a few months earlier to represent Manzanar's 1,500 *Kibei*-dominated mess hall workers more effectively than did the Japanese-American Citizens League (JACL)-inspired Manzanar Work Corps chaired by Tayama. Without delay, authorities removed Ueno from the camp to the jail of the nearby town of Independence.

Ueno's arrest and jailing—he was the first Manzanarian to be jailed outside the camp—aroused hostility among the other internees. They widely believed him innocent of any part in the beating of Tayama, although many reviled Tayama for his alleged role as a government informant and for his promotion of unpopular JACL policies regarding the management of Manzanar and the drafting of the *Nisei* into the military from behind barbed wire. Many internees felt, too, that Ueno was being victimized because of his recent report to the Federal Bureau of Investigation that certain WRA administrators were appropriating internees' meat and sugar allotments and selling them on the black market. At least in part because of the pressure mounted by an internee committee formed to protest Ueno's removal from Manzanar, Ralph P.



Merritt, the camp's director, agreed to return Ueno to the camp on December 6 and have him placed in the jail there for further processing.

At 6 P.M., when the negotiating committee appeared at Mess Hall 22, where Ueno was employed as a cook, to report that Ueno had returned, the committee encountered a crush of some 2,000 to 4,000 internees. When the committee attempted to disband, its objective having been accomplished, the move was shouted down by the crowd which felt Ueno should be unconditionally released. If not, it would use force to free him. Moreover, some in the angry crowd yelled that internees like Tayama, who many considered the camp's number one *inu* or dog, should be murdered.

Next, some of the crowd devised a hurried plan of action wherein one group set out to find Tayama in the camp hospital to finish the job begun the night before and the other moved to liberate Ueno from jail. Thwarting the first group, hospital personnel hid Tayama under his bed; the second group became involved in what came to be known as the Manzanar Riot.

Though interviewers Embrey and Hansen were familiar with what preceded the riot, what transpired at the camp jail once the demonstrators arrived there had remained clouded. Following is an excerpt from Ueno's interview, transcribed and edited by Betty E. Mitson, in which Ueno relates what he witnessed from his vantage point inside the Manzanar jail in the California desert that particular evening in 1942.



*Did any of the internees see you when you came back from Independence?*



UENO COLLECTION

*In 1940, Harry Ueno and his family lived peacefully in Los Angeles; two years later they were interned at Manzanar as security risks for the duration of World War II.*

Only the people inside the jail. There were about five or six inmates in there. They told me, "A lot of people were rushing around here last night." They told me what was going on. Then pretty soon the committee of five, [Joe] Kurihara [a Hawaii-born *Nisei* World War I veteran who was outspoken in his opposition to the evacuation, the camp administration, and suspected internee collaborators] and the other four people [three *Issei* (Japan-born) and one *Kibei*] came over and talked to me [in the jail]. They said, "Wait a little while. We are going to negotiate, and we might get you released or something. So just wait quietly in here." So I slept in the jail for awhile, until another hour or so. Then, little by little, people started coming by the police station and the administration building. A lot of them came over to the window and

shook hands with me because the window was wide open. I could have walked out if I had wanted to. Some of them said, "Come on, let's go out." I said, "No."

*Michi Weglyn's book [Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps (New York: Morrow, 1976), p. 6] shows a picture of the Manzanar jail. It appears that it would be impossible for a prisoner to look out of a window. How could you have gone out a window?*

No, no. They had a great big window. I think there were two windows. The glass was wide open, so I could have walked out if I had wanted to.

*Would you describe the jail?*

The jail was just a regular barrack like those we lived in. I think that half or one-third was taken up by the police station, and the rest was for the jail purpose, see. So the window was wide open; I could have gotten out anytime I wanted to. But I didn't want to break my promise to the negotiating committee, so I stayed in there. Then by the evening. . . .

*Had you seen your wife yet?*

No, she didn't come to the jail because they [the committee] told her, "Maybe by late tonight, we might have good news."

*Oh, you might be released.*

Yeah, so that's why she didn't come over. She was waiting at home.

About six o'clock, I guess, it started getting a little darker, and a lot of people filled up the open space there [in front of the jail]. They were yelling and shouting, and the wind was blowing about thirty-five miles an hour. You know how Manzanar is, when the wind is whipped up;

it's dusty and pebbles fly. It was kind of a cold night. I think it was about a little after six that I noticed some of the MPs were shaking because so many people were out there—young fellows. Then the sergeant in charge went around and said, "Remember Pearl Harbor!" He was yelling, "Hold your ground!" Because they were scared, see. Two or three times he went around yelling, "Remember Pearl Harbor! Hold your ground!" In the meantime, I could see that Captain [Martyn L.] Hall [commander of the military police, which had been called in to the Manzanar camp from their adjacent compound by Project Director Ralph P. Merritt] was in the sentry box because the top of the sentry box was glass and lights were right in there. I could see that he was meeting with two or three people inside the sentry box. Then soon they [the military police] started putting on gas masks. So I told the people in the front, "You'd better back off, because they're going to. . . ."

*When did the guards come in? When did the soldiers come in?*

They were already there when they brought me back from Independence. Then they were putting on the gas masks. So I told the people, "You'd better step back. Otherwise, they are going to throw the tear gas." I could see the tear gas cannisters.

*You were talking to some of the people?*

Yes, in the front of the jail. I could yell because they were all nearby. So they started to back up a little bit. Then as soon as they put on the gas masks, they started throwing the cannisters. I don't know how many—ten or twenty. You know,



*Branded a troublemaker after the Manzanar riot, Ueno (with pipe) was incarcerated at the government's permanent isolation center in Leupp, Arizona.*

the smoke was so whipped up with the wind, and people started running. And you couldn't see anything; the smoke covered it up.

Then I heard five or six shots nearby and tommy guns or machine guns on the far east side of the police station. When the smoke was clear, I saw one man laying on the ground. I was hoping that just . . . I heard the gunshot, but I hoped that it was just a dummy bullet. I was hoping it was just to scare off the people. But I saw one person laying flat in the front of the police station. As soon as everything cleared, I saw them carry in that boy.

*Into the police station?*

Into the police station side of the building, and they put him right on top of the table. He had a bullet in his stomach, and he had a little bit of life left.

Raymond Hirai [an internee] was

sitting there and another fellow [internee]. You know, when this other fellow saw that the boy was shot, he yelled, "Is this a democracy? My gosh, I made a mistake!" In other words . . . a lot of people thought he was working for the FBI. A lot of Japanese had been stool-pigeoned by him. I haven't any proof, but that's what the people had talked about. But he said, "I made a mistake. How could I have known such a thing would happen?" He was yelling about himself. That was about 9:30 P.M.

*Mr. Ueno, just before, when you were in the jail and the crowd had gathered and you were talking to them, I've heard that the negotiating committee had lost control of the crowd. That the crowd was no longer listening to their suggestions. Is that pretty accurate?*

I think that the crowd was impatient. The committee was looking for Merritt. After the riot, I talked to Kurihara and others. They were looking for Merritt, up and down the administration building and all around. But they couldn't find Merritt, because Merritt was outside in the sentry box talking with Captain Hall and [James W.] Gilkey [Chief Internal Security Officer]. He wasn't there. In the meantime, the crowd was getting impatient. So I think it was partly Merritt's fault. If he had stayed out and talked to the committee, they could have calmed down the people, maybe.

*He let things get out of hand.*

Yeah. But I didn't see people carrying rocks or sticks or anything like that, as was shown in the *Farewell to Manzanar* television show. I never saw anybody doing that. I couldn't see on the other side of the administration building. But as far as I





could see, nobody threw anything physically.

*How about singing patriotic Japanese songs?*

They sang the Japanese navy march song and others too. It was cold. They had to exercise to keep warm, so they were singing those kind of march songs, yes. But otherwise, I didn't see any direct violence toward the MPs. I know the MPs were only a few, compared to the big crowd, so they were scared.

*Were the people shot in the front or the back?*

The one I saw that fell down, I saw the blood stain on the front. It's possible that he was hit at close range, so the bullet might have penetrated through his body. But the other people, every one—the way I heard, I never saw them—all got the bullet in the back. Every one. [Eleven were wounded, two of them mortally.]

*They were running from the tear gas.*

Yeah, they were running away. The bullet was a shotgun pellet, but, you see, the pellet was a big one. I think there are six or eight pellets in a shotgun. So if they are at close range, they could probably penetrate the body. I saw the boy named [Katsuji]

*Finally transferred in late 1943 to the segregation center for recalcitrants at Tule Lake, where he was held until 1946, Ueno (middle row, second from left) was reunited with his family.*

Kanagawa. His blood stain was in the stomach. I don't know, but it probably came from the back and came out in the front. Could be, I don't know for sure.

*There is some confusion about one point that I keep reading about in different reports. It is said one way one time and another way another time. There's a lot of talk that just prior to the shooting somebody released a driverless car in the direction of the jail and that it hit into the jail. And after it hit the jail, the firing followed. Some people say that this happened after the firing. Others say that it never even happened. Do you recall anything like that?*

No, nothing on the jail.

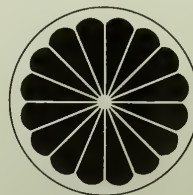
*No truck?*

No, no truck on the jail. But, you see, the line was long, you know, a lot of people were in the front there, and the other side curved in, so I couldn't see beyond that. But I saw nothing like that happen on the front of the jail, or nearby the jail. The only thing, they were attacking the MPs verbally, and the young

MPs were kind of shaking and scared. I don't blame them; there were so many people in front. Probably a lot of them had never seen Japanese people before in their lives until they were called into the service.

*Did you hear any order to shoot?*

No, no. Nothing. That's why as soon as a shot was fired, I could see Captain Hall running back to the jail building. He called the sergeant and asked, "Who did the shooting?" The sergeant said he shot twice. I made a record of it. Another young MP reported that he fired three shots, and another said he shot once. I heard that reported to Captain Hall. I could hear a machine gun or something away over on the other side. It was a little more, kind of quick, what you call tat-tat-tat-tat, at the other end.



During the night of the riot, the camp remained in a turbulent state. Kitchen bells tolled continuously, beatings of accused informers ensued, and military police units patrolled the camp and broke up



*Work parties of evacuees cleared the land of brush at the Manzanar Relocation Center.*

numerous gatherings of evacuees. Those whose names appeared on blacklists and deathlists—along with their families and some WRA staffers—were spirited out of the camp by the administration and placed in protective custody. Then the administration began a roundup of the individuals believed to be responsible for the disruption. Within the next few days, the first group was sent to an abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp in Death Valley, while the latter was imprisoned within local town jails.

Never charged nor given a hearing, Harry Ueno was again removed from Manzanar after midnight following the riot and taken this time to the jail at Bishop, the largest town in Inyo County. A few days later, he was transferred to the jail in Lone Pine along with a number of other suspected troublemakers. During the month that they were there, Ueno recalls, the military policemen guarding them sometimes got drunk in the night and peppered their cell door with rifle shots.

On January 9, 1943, this group of suspects was transported by bus and train to Moab, Utah. Most of the next four months of Ueno's time was spent in this temporary isolation center (which also had been a CCC

camp) established in the mountains outside of Moab by the WRA authorities for dissidents from all of the ten camps. His last two weeks were passed in the county jail in downtown Moab after a disagreement with a guard. From there Ueno was trucked in a 4 × 6-foot box with five or six other men across three states to the town of Leupp, Arizona, which the WRA had selected as the site of the permanent isolation center for internees deemed recalcitrant. Prior to settling into the camp at Leupp, replete with guard towers, a high fence, and 150 military police assigned to guard about 45 internees, Ueno was jailed in nearby Winslow for two or three days where he was served adulterated food, housed in cramped quarters, and left inadequately protected from the oppressive weather. When finally taken to the camp at Leupp, he was jailed for about two weeks before being granted housing in a barrack. Ueno had not yet, in spite of repeated WRA promises and his persistent demands for their fulfillment, received a trial or hearing to determine his guilt or innocence to any charge that

caused him to be removed from his family at Manzanar and detained at various jails and camps.

When the WRA closed its facilities at Leupp in December 1943, almost a year to the day after the riot at Manzanar, Ueno was transferred to the segregation center at Tule Lake. Again he spent an initial week in an Army-supervised stockade before he was permitted to live in the compound. At last reunited with his wife and children, he promised the director of the center, Ray Best, that he would remain apart from all camp politics. Although a distressed Ueno had renounced his citizenship while at Moab, he was ultimately persuaded in late December 1945 by his knowledge of the devastated condition of postwar Japan to remain in the United States and spare his family any further hardship. Three months later, he was released from Tule Lake, one of the last to go.

After working on the railroad in several small central California towns, Ueno turned to farming in the Santa Clara valley. In 1954, his citizenship was restored. At the time of his interview in 1976, Ueno appeared to have achieved a measure of affluence, but these circumstances had not induced in him a state of amnesia about his past.

Today, he no longer harbors grievances either against the government which deprived him of his rights and his liberty or persons with whom he differed during America's "years of infamy." Still, he staunchly believes that America should take whatever measures needed to prevent the repetition of what Eugene V. Rostow, noted authority on constitutional law, has called this country's "greatest wartime mistake." □

*(See page 77 for notes.)*



# REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

## *Indians of California: The Changing Image.*

By James J. Rawls. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984. xvi, 293 pp. \$19.95 hardcover.)

Reviewed by Lowell John Bean, Professor of Anthropology at California State University, Hayward, and author of numerous books on California Indians.

For the most part, the historical literature, both professional and popular, treats California's Indians with considerable neglect or abuse because the authors have failed to look at what is known about the Indians' culture and history. Why factually incorrect and simplistic stereotypes about California Indians continue for generation after generation is puzzling. Jim Rawls's book, *Indians of California*, suggests the reason.

Dr. Rawls has written a remarkable book—the sort of book one wishes one had written oneself. He has addressed a very significant problem, applying rigorous method and a broad philosophical approach not only to a problem within California's written history, but to a problem in the history of many cultures and their relationships with others. His book is a study in stigma, in the persistence of cultural misinformation by one culture vis-à-vis another.

Rawls explains to us how and why each of the European cultures which interacted with California Indians has viewed them. He notes that the views were efficient and useful to the cultures that entered California. Cultural attitudes are always more rooted in the need of the people who develop them than they are in the reality of the culture being viewed.

It is particularly appropriate that this book be published at this time. Discussions with historians and recent articles on the settlement of California indicate a shocking state of historical revisionism. This includes a vigorous concern for defending and even denying

much of the horror about the conquest of California by Europeans.

For the most part, the history of the Indians and the impact of European culture has remained veiled, hidden, or ignored in all levels of publications—grade school, high school, college level, and serious scholarly work. The images of California Indians as simple, lacking in culture or sophistication, and not utilizing or manipulating their environment in efficient ways are images which, Rawls points out, began at the very first instance of European contact and continue until this day. These are useful ideas for some non-Indians—useful for ignoring needs and for arguing in legal suits that Indians should not have legal claims for losses.

When I first began working with California Indians in 1958, I talked to elderly people whose grandparents and

*The Klamath tribe's red-headed woodpecker dance evidences the cultural complexity that contemporary anthropologists now believe characterized California's Indians.*

parents had told them of their early experiences with Europeans. This information was for the most part new to me. The anthropological literature contained little of it despite the publications of S.F. Cook, and the historical literature was bereft of the experiences remembered by Indians. Later it became apparent to me why Indian-White relationships were so often strained. It was because in the memories passed down to the elders' children and grandchildren were the kinds of facts that Rawls discusses. His book tells how the Spanish, the Mexicans, and the first Americans who came to California viewed Indians varyingly as people to be isolated, exterminated, or used as cheap labor or slaves. It clearly



exposes the *raison d'être* for this sort of thinking, that reason being if people have no culture or way of life seen to be worthy in terms of another's value system, one can behave without guilt or conscience toward them. Sufficient social distance can be maintained so that exploitation, prejudice, and even extermination are possible. (Anthropologists refer to this as the development of a "sectoral morality.")

If there are any shortcomings in Rawls' book, they are problems which he has chosen not to develop, nor perhaps should they be in this volume. Better than any other current active historian, Rawls has kept pace with the contemporary anthropological literature that belies the ignorance of past interpretations of California Indians. Historians should be aware that anthropologists today see much greater social, political, economic and philosophical sophistication among California Indians than did earlier anthropologists such as A.L. Kroeber, and consequently, reliance on the literature of California Indian anthropology written two or three generations ago is no longer appropriate. Quite the contrary, the prevailing view among anthropologists today is that California Indians were among the most sophisticated and culturally complex peoples in the world who depended upon hunting and gathering and quasi-agricultural systems.

Rawls' study also suggests the need for further research into the process of cultural stigmatization and social distancing. It would be appropriate to investigate what the counter-views of the American Indians were toward Europeans and the images and stereotypes they developed about European culture. Another area of interest suggested by Rawls' brilliant work is how stereotypes and images continue in other aspects of our lives. In the epilogue of the book, Rawls brings the reader up to the development of the Indian reservation in California and reminds us that the modern reservation, an institution which spread across the country and has sig-

nificantly affected American Indians and American culture since, was invented in California. The kinds of images and stereotypes prevailing in this system are not unlike those Rawls describes for earlier times. The persistence of these images in the face of abundant data which demonstrate that they are not true is a process in itself worth examining. What is the vested interest, for example, of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that encourages it to continue propagating such similar sorts of images?

Rawls, then, in addition to revealing hidden aspects of American culture and its relationship to the American Indian, has provided us a way of looking at a present-day condition and, certainly, at groups other than the Indian. □

## *The Anthropology of World's Fairs: San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915.*

By Burton Benedict with contributions by Marjorie M. Dobkin, Gray Brechin, Elizabeth N. Armstrong & George Starr. (London & Berkeley: Lowie Museum of Anthropology in conjunction with Scolar Press, 1983. 175 pages. \$15.00.)

*Reviewed by James J. Rawls, author of Indians of California: The Changing Image (1984) and coauthor of California: An Interpretive History (1983) and Land of Liberty: A United States History (1985).*

In the opening essay of this remarkable book, Burton Benedict surveys the history of world's fairs from the Crystal Palace of 1851 to the Osaka Exposition of 1970. He applies the discipline of anthropology to the recurring phenomena of world's fairs, and thereby offers some fascinating insights.

Benedict compares the world's fair to the potlatch of the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. Both the potlatch and the

world's fair are held on special ceremonial grounds, and in both instances the participants offer massive displays of goods to establish or validate their rank. The parallel extends even to the denouement of the two rituals. At the close of a typical world's fair, its grand but temporary structures are destroyed. So too in the ultimate potlatch. Great quantities of goods are destroyed before rivals, thus unequivocally demonstrating the abundance of wealth possessed by the destroyer.

Benedict also offers an intriguing analysis of the changing layout and arrangement of exhibits at the various world's fairs. The first expositions, he points out, were held in single buildings. As the scale of the fairs expanded, the grounds came to include theme buildings for the display of such categories of goods as fine arts, manufactures, and food products. In the late nineteenth century the fairgrounds came to be dominated by large national pavilions. Each nation competed with the others in trumpeting its own products and national virtues. Finally, in the twentieth century, it has been the buildings of the great multinational corporations which have grown to dominate the grounds. Thus corporate enterprises have emerged as the final players in the great potlatch tradition. Benedict concludes that the ground plans of the fairs reflect both the growth of nationalism and the rise of the multinational corporation.

Marjorie M. Dobkin, in her essay on the planning and politics of the Panama Pacific International Exposition, demonstrates that the rejected Burnham Plan for San Francisco was applied in principle to the design of the PPIE. The Burnham Plan, which would have transformed The City into The City Beautiful, thus found some application in the realm of fantasy. Dobkin does well to relate the PPIE to the graft trials of the Ruef era. She correctly points out that the reformers who supported the graft trials were conspicuously absent from the PPIE board of directors. She errs, however, in suggesting that the split be-



tween the conservative and reform factions in the city "erupted into violence" with the shooting of prosecutor Francis Heney in 1908. There was, in fact, no evidence that the attempted assassination was in anyway connected with the "graft defense." Dobkin also mistakenly identifies Hiram Johnson as the gubernatorial candidate of the "newly-formed Progressive party in 1910." Johnson ran and was elected governor in 1910 as the candidate of the Republican party.

Gray Brechin's beautifully written essay on the architecture of the fair describes the PPIE as an expression of San Francisco's mythic identity. "This was what San Francisco wanted to be, but could only sustain for nine months. It was an evocation of a past that never was." Likewise, Elizabeth N. Armstrong interprets the public art of the fair as an embodiment of the values of westering man—vitality and exuberance, strength and mastery.

The final essay in the volume is George Starr's chronicle of the various interpreters of the PPIE. The fair itself strained with self-consciousness, filled with sculpture and painting which was overtly symbolic. Visitors to the fair responded to the challenge, invariably "reading" the PPIE for its true meaning. Starr's own reading of the epicenter of the fair, the colossal Tower of Jewels, is harsh. The tower, he avers, "fell into bathos; its closest affinities were not with structures elsewhere on the Exposition grounds, but with the bombastic kitsch of sets for motion pictures like *Ben Hur*."

*The Anthropology of World's Fairs* is a wonderfully produced book, well designed and illustrated with many finely colored plates. Its essays are generally sound and always provocative. The book was originally published in conjunction with an exhibit at the Lowie Museum of Anthropology in Berkeley. It is an important contribution to our understanding of the place of world's fairs in our own culture, and it offers a thoughtful analysis of that grandest of the San Francisco fairs, the Panama Pacific. □



## Tahoe: An Environmental History

By Douglas H. Strong. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984. xviii, 252 pp. \$16.95.)

*Reviewed by William Kahrl, author of Water and Power and editor of the California Water Atlas. He writes a column on California political issues for the Los Angeles Times.*

Fifteen years ago the environmentalist writer William Bronson suggested that the time may have come to kiss Lake Tahoe goodbye. Despite continuing evidence of the lake's degradation and the often venal incompetence of the agencies entrusted with its protection, Douglas H. Strong still isn't quite ready to pucker up.

In *Tahoe*, Strong recounts the sad history of the lake from its formation and early exploration to the renegotiation in 1980 of the bi-state compact between California and Nevada which governs the operation of the Tahoe Regional

*Efforts to preserve Lake Tahoe's environment date to the 1930s when local residents such as these swimmers at Rubicon Beach clashed with local commercial interests.*

Planning Agency today. This is not so much the environmental history the subtitle promises as it is a story of governmental institutions, local, state, and federal, often working at cross-purposes and generally not working at all.

Strong's clear, dispassionate prose performs a valuable service in putting many aspects of the modern conflict over the lake's future into its proper historical context. For example, efforts to preserve the environment of the lake from overdevelopment are not a creation of post-1960s eco-consciousness. Local residents were fighting to save the lake back in the 1930s and, then as now, saw their best intentions strangled by greedy local commercial interests.

Similarly, the idea that a complete federal takeover offers the only hope for the lake basin's long-term protection did not catch hold in the present generation simply because everything else from local control to regional authority has so obvi-

ously failed. The federal government has been studying the lake's potential as a national park ever since the turn of the last century and rejected the concept initially because even then the quality of the Tahoe environment had been so degraded that it no longer seemed to qualify as fit for federal preservation.

This is a rich story to which Strong brings no new penetrating insights. His text offers a meticulous review of events but no real analysis that would help us to gain perspective either on the meaning of this dismal public record or the motivations of the many people who have contributed to it. As such, his book should prove pleasing for readers on both sides of the current battle lines. He is mildly optimistic about the future, moderately distressed by the decline of the basin's environmental quality, but cautiously respectful of the points of view of everyone involved.

One might wish for more in a story that has been the cause of so much passionate dispute, but that is not the kind of book Strong has chosen to write. □

## *New Force on the Left: Tom Hayden and the Campaign Against Corporate America.*

By John H. Bunzel. (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1983. 131 pp. \$6.95.)

*Reviewed by* Spencer C. Olin, Jr., *Professor of History, University of California, Irvine. Dr. Olin, who is also Director of the Focused Research Program in Orange County Area Studies at the university, is author of California's Prodigal Sons: Hiram Johnson and the Progressives, 1911-1917 and California Politics, 1846-1920: The Emerging Corporate State.*

This feisty little book will infuriate not only Tom Hayden's supporters but also

those who prefer probing analyses to polemical tracts. *New Force on the Left* is a provocative attempt by John Bunzel, a political scientist and former president of San Jose State University who is now associated with the Hoover Institution, to discredit Hayden's current political activities by warning us of "the ghosts of the radical past" and "neo-Marxist myths and mirrors." According to Bunzel, those ghosts today haunt the programs of Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy.

Bunzel, it should be pointed out, also has ghosts who haunt his own views of America's economic development. More than twenty years ago, he wrote in similarly deprecating terms about small businessmen who were anachronistically clinging to pre-industrial values rather than getting in step with the realities of an advanced industrial age. In seeking the best ways to organize industrial society, Bunzel adamantly rejected the leadership of these small entrepreneurs, who lacked "the qualities necessary to guide a great democracy in time of crisis." Instead, it was the corporate businessmen who possessed the imagination and long-range planning skills required by the leaders of a powerful nation. Not at all surprising, then, that Bunzel should be so repelled by Hayden's contemporary left-wing (though non-Marxist) assault on corporate capitalism.

*New Force on the Left* begins with a description of Hayden as an SDS student activist in the 1960s, including his participation in the Economic Research and Action Project, the Newark Community Union Project, and the peace movement. The book then proceeds to a brief discussion of Hayden's views in the 1960s regarding the use of violence. In Bunzel's opinion, it was Hayden's experiences in the South, in the ghetto, and in Vietnam that finally convinced him of the limits of reform and inclined him toward more "extremist" and confrontational alternatives. (Bunzel recalls having been in Chicago in August 1968 as a delegate from California to the Democratic Na-

tional Convention while Hayden devoted his energies there to violent radical protest, thereby allegedly contributing to Nixon's victory that year.) Bunzel dismisses as a devious "ploy" Hayden's assertion in the late-1960s that the establishment was itself the primary user of violence. In this instance, as in others, Hayden is the more knowledgeable observer, for the historical record clearly reveals that the great bulk of this nation's violence has been repressive (by the State or ruling groups), not expressive or insurrectionary.

In recent years, Hayden has shifted his overall strategy while retaining his basic critique of American society. He has moved inside the political system. In the process, he has created a legitimate, non-revolutionary organization called the Campaign for Economic Democracy. Bunzel's description of that vehicle for change stresses its goal to elect local and state officials committed to Hayden's "post-materialist" program of voluntary simplicity and no-growth. Its "tireless cadre" of supporters are determined to "take over" dozens of California cities, having already won control of Chico, Santa Cruz, and Santa Monica. Vigorously pursuing such "emotionally-charged" populist issues as housing and rent control, the CED, according to Bunzel, seeks to generate "class feelings" of hardship and inequality while promoting the redistribution of wealth and power. By focusing on city councils and state legislatures rather than on Congress and the White House, such efforts constitute a major departure for liberals and progressives in this country. (Here Bunzel forgets the very similar efforts by American socialists at the municipal level in the early twentieth century.)

Bunzel's most biting scorn is reserved for Hayden's condemnation of corporate capitalism as an economic system. Responding to the charge of monolithic corporate domination of this nation's affairs, Bunzel presents a competing pluralist viewpoint that emphasizes the positive roles of market forces, con-



sumer sovereignty, regulatory agencies, and pressure groups serving as external restraints on unlimited corporate power. Hayden's analysis, on the other hand, is seriously flawed "because he equates possession of resources with the possession of power" and because he has little understanding of the need for economic growth and profit as "spurs to action." While "there is some truth to Hayden's charges," all in all they are exaggerated and defective.

To be sure, we need careful scrutiny of all political programs and organizations, the CED included. *New Force on the Left*, however, fails to contribute very much to serious political debate about options. It is too obsessively focused on Hayden's 1960s activities and their reverberations in the 1980s, thereby miss-

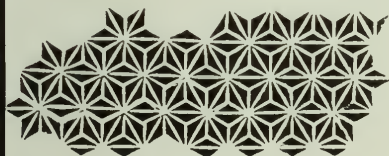
ing what is valuable about his current efforts. This is highly unfortunate, for at a time when we find ourselves in a number of intellectual cul-de-sacs and badly in need of some questioning of fundamental assumptions, Bunzel might have been less worried about "the ghosts of the radical past" and more concerned about alternative routes to social betterment.

One possible alternative suggested by the CED would require movement away from our customary modern reliance on centralized and bureaucratic institutions, whether public or private. This path would involve an expansion and energizing of local initiatives. Bunzel himself declares that "factional conflict and the competition for power among individuals and groups in society" are

essential conditions of a political democracy. Given his own ideological preferences, there is every reason for Bunzel to oppose the political content of the CED's programs. At the same time, is it unreasonable to suggest that he might welcome that organization's reassertion of the importance of citizen participation in local settings? Curiously, the virtues of such local activism remain a blind spot for many Americans, who celebrate the potential vitality of churches, kinship networks, and voluntary associations without ever investing them with any political content. Could it be that when it comes down to the nitty-gritty, down to practice rather than mere rhetoric, Bunzel and many others would actually prefer to reverse the intrusions of democratic politics in the United States? □

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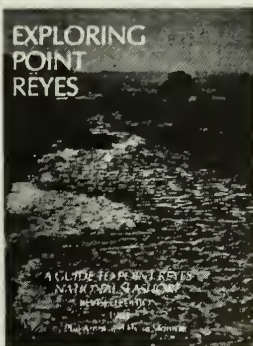


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Buck, Marcia Castle and Patricia Castle Smith. *Gold Rush Nuggets: A Gold Mine of Information about Ten Counties in California's Mother Lode Area*. Pasadena: Castle Ventures, 1984. \$9.95 (paper). Order from: Castle Ventures; 1111 Blanche Street; Pasadena, CA 91106.

Bunzel, John H. *New Force on the Left: Tom Hayden and the Campaign against Corporate America*. Stanford: Stanford University, Hoover Institution Press, 1983. \$6.95 (paper). Order from: Hoover Institution Press; Stanford University; Stanford, CA 94305.

Camarillo, Albert. *Chicanos in California*. San Francisco: Boyd & Fraser Publishing Co., 1984. \$6.95 (paper). Order

The California Check List provides notice of publication of books, pamphlets, and monographs pertaining to the history of California. Readers knowing of recent publications, including reprints or revised editions, that need additional publicity are requested to send the following bibliographical information to the compiler for this list: Author, title, name and address of publisher, date of publication, number of pages, and price.

from: Boyd & Fraser Publishing Co.; 3627 Sacramento Street; San Francisco, CA 94118.

Cohen, Michael P. *The Pathless Way: John Muir and American Wilderness*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1894. \$25.00. Order from: University of Wisconsin Press; 114 North Murray Street; Madison, Wisconsin 53715.

Conley, Frances. *Journey to a Distant Shore*. San Pablo: The San Pablo Historical Society, 1984. \$5.95. Order from: The San Pablo Historical Society; One Alvarado Square; San Pablo, CA 94806.

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Cornelius, Wayne A., et al. *Mexican Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area: A Summary of Current Knowledge*. La Jolla: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 1982. \$3.00 (paper). Order from: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies; Q-060; University of California, San Diego; La Jolla, CA 92093.

Crosby, Harry W. *The Cave Paintings of Baja California*. Revised Edition. La Jolla: Copley Books, 1984. \$27.50 (plus \$1.00 postage). Order from: Copley Books; Post Office Box 957; 7776 Ivanhoe Avenue; La Jolla, CA 92038.

del Castillo, Richard Griswold. *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850-1890: A Social History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983. \$6.95 (paper). Order from: University of California Press; 2120 Berkeley Way; Berkeley, CA 94720.

Dwyer, Richard A. and Richard E. Lingenfelter. *Lying on the Eastern Slope: James Townsend's Comic Journalism on the Mining Frontier*. Gainesville: University

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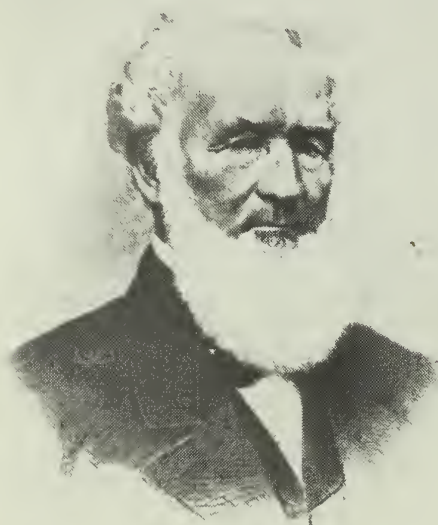
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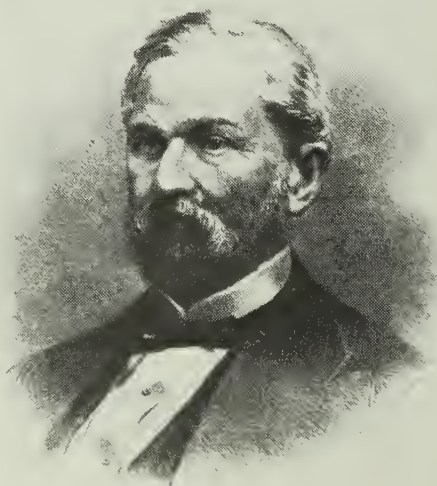


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- Rawls, James J. *Indians of California: The Changing Image*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984. \$19.95. Order from: University of Oklahoma Press; 1005 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK 73019.
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- Ruhge, Justin M. *The Historic Cannons of Goleta: in Search of a Pedigree . . .* Goleta, CA: Justin M. Ruhge, 1983. \$11.00 (paper; \$2.00 postage). Order from: Justin M. Ruhge; Post Office Box 2216; Goleta, CA 93118.
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- Steffens, Lincoln. *The Sacramento Years*. Edited by John F. Wilhelm. Sacramento: Sacramento County Historical Society, 1984. \$6.75 (paper). Order from: Sacramento County Historical Society; 1058 40th Street; Sacramento, CA 95819.
- Vaughan, Bradley W. *Vignettes of California: Sketches of the Golden Gate*. Chandler, AZ; Vaughan Publications, 1984. \$7.00 (paper, plus 65¢ postage). Order from: Vaughan Publications; Post Office Box O; Chandler, AZ 85224.
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- Wilhelm, John F. *Shoot Out at Oak Grove*. Sacramento: Sacramento County Historical Society, 1984. \$3.75 (paper). Order from: Sacramento County Historical Society; 1058 40th Street; Sacramento, CA 95819.
- Wilhelm, John F. (ed.). *Tales of Two Sutters*. Sacramento: Sacramento County Historical Society, 1984. \$3.75 (paper). Order from: Sacramento County Historical Society; 1058 40th Street; Sacramento, CA 95819.

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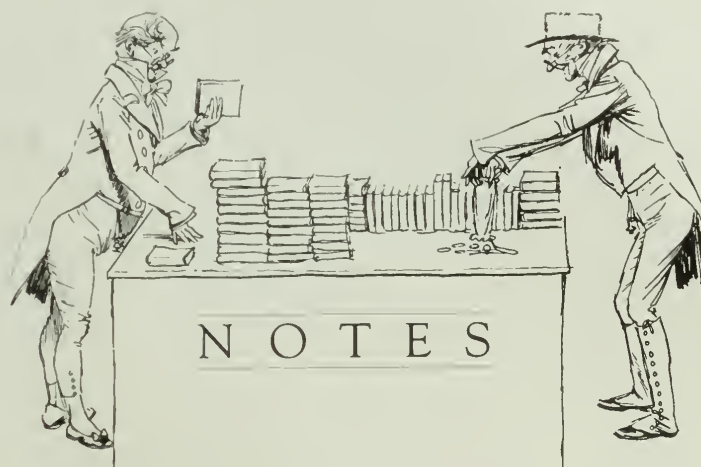
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**Rapoport, *Political Odyssey of Pat Brown*, pp. 2-9.**

1. Delmatier, et al., *The Rumble of California Politics* (New York: 1970, p. 321).
2. Author's interview with Pat Brown.
3. Secretary of State's office, Sacramento.
4. Delmatier, *California Politics*, p. 308.
5. Author's interviews with Pat Brown, Frank Brown and Harold Brown.
6. Author's interview with Pat Brown.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Pat Brown Oral History, Regional Oral History Project, University of California Bancroft Library.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Author's interview with Paul Taylor.
14. Pat Brown, statewide address, January 20, 1960.
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16. Ibid.
17. Author's phone conversation with Pat Brown, 1983.
18. Remark made in author's presence during campaign tour, October 1980.
19. Author's interview with Preble Stolz.
20. Draper, Hal, *Berkeley: The New Stu-*

*dent Revolt* (New York: 1965).

21. *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 22, 1966.
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1. Act of September 28, 1950 (sec. 1), R.S. 4611, 4 Stat. 519, currently codified at 46 U.S.C. 712; Act of March 5, 1835 (sec. 3), R.S. 5347, 4 Stat. 776; the White Act of December 21, 1898, R.S. 4596; 2 Fed. Cas. 242 (1806).
2. Rev. W. Taylor, *Seven Years' Street Preaching in San Francisco* (1856), p. 24.
3. J. Williams, *Blow the Man Down* (1959), p. 232.
4. Taylor, *Seven Years*, October 21, 1861.
5. R. Dillon, *Shanghaiing Days* (1961), p. 187.
6. Letter to J. Williar from K. Barrett, November 25, 1972, quoting contents of a letter concerning her great-grandfather William Davis.
7. See F. Monteagle, *Bare Knuckles at Pt. Isabel* (1977), p. 2; see also P. Fanning, *Great Crimes of the West* (1929), p. 242.
8. Dillon, *Shanghaiing Days*, 185.

9. Ibid., 189.

10. Ibid., 28.
11. Act of June 19, 1886 (sec. 3).
12. *Robertson v Baldwin*, 195 U.S. 287 (1897).
13. Act of June 28, 1906, 34 Stat. 551; Act of March 2, 1907, 34 Stat. 1233; Act of March 4, 1909, 35 Stat. 1103.
14. Rev. J. Fell, *British Merchant Seamen in San Francisco* (1899), p. 29.

**Zimmerman, "Boosterism Promoted," pp. 22-33.**

1. For a history of boosterism in California, see Richard Orsi, *Selling the Golden State: A Study of Boosterism in 19th Century California* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1973). The entire process is lampooned in Louis Adamic, "Los Angeles! There She Blows!" *Outlook and Independent* August 13, 1930, pp. 563-565.
2. Lillian Symes, "The Beautiful and the Dumb," *Harper's Magazine*, June 1931, pp. 23-25; Sarah Comstock, "The Great American Mirror," *Harper's Magazine*, May 1928, pp. 716-719; Grace Stinson, *The Rise of the Labor Movement in Los Angeles* (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955); Paul Gleye, *The Architecture of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Rosebud Books, 1981), pp. 97-98.

3. *Member's Annual* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1921), p. 41.
4. *Going South for the Winter with Hints to Consumptives* (New York: Edward O. Jenkins, 1873), p. 222.
5. Charles Dwight Williard, *History of the Chamber of Commerce of Los Angeles, California* (Los Angeles: Kingsley-Barnes, Neuner, 1899), pp. 30-31.
6. John Baur, *Health Seekers of Southern California* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1959); Billy M. Jones, *Health Seekers in the Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967); Glenn Dumke, "Advertising Southern California Before the Boom of 1887," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, 24 (March 1942): pp. 16-17.
7. Edna Monch Parker, "The Southern Pacific Railroad and Settlement in Southern California," *Pacific Historical Review*, 6 (June 1937): 107-114; Nordhoff, *California*, pp. 107-108; Dumke, "Advertising Southern California Before the Boom of 1887," pp. 18-19. The best selection of Southern Pacific promotional brochures is at The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
8. Parker, "The Southern Pacific Railroad and Settlement in Southern California," pp. 108-111; Dumke, "Advertising Southern California Before the Boom of 1887," p. 18.
9. See, for example, N.C. Carnall, *California Guide for Tourists and Settlers* (San Francisco: Carnall, 1889); *California for Health, Pleasure, and Profit: Why You Should Go There* (San Francisco: Southern Pacific, 1893). An exception was Paul Shoup (ed.), *California: South of the Tehachapis* (San Francisco: Southern Pacific, 1903).
10. (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1876), pp. 123-124.
11. Norman Stanley, *No Little Plans* (Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, 1956), pp. 5-6.
12. *Member's Annual* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1910), p. 18.
13. Symes, "The Beautiful and the Dumb," pp. 22-32; Walter Woelke, "How Long Los Angeles?" *Sunset*, 52 (April 1924): 10-11; B.C. Forbes, "Cities in the Making," *Overland Monthly*, 58 (October 1930): 305; Lee Shippey, Max Yavno, *The Los Angeles Book* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), pp. 43-57; Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1973), pp. 165-182.
14. Richard Mathison, *Three Cars in Every Garage* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), pp. 32-34; J. Allen Davis, *A Friend to All Motorists: The Story of the Automobile Club of Southern California Through Sixty-Five Years, 1900-1965* (Los Angeles: Automobile Club, 1967), pp. 16-17; *Southern California: Vacationland Supreme* (Los Angeles: All Year Club, 1925), pp. 34-35.
15. George French, *Twentieth Century Advertising* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1926), pp. 37-49; James Playsted Wood, *The Story of Advertising* (New York: Ronald Press, 1958), pp. 363-370; C.G. Milham, *Southern California All The Year* (Los Angeles All Year Club, 1924), p. 36; C.G. Milham, "The All-Year Club of Southern California," *Western Advertising*, 5 (April 1923): 7-9, 43-44. The Club's view of its mission is explained in *Your Tourist Industry* (Los Angeles: All Year Club, 1938).
16. Mathison, *Three Cars in Every Garage*, pp. 88-89; Davis, *A Friend to All Motorists*, p. 105; *Southern California: Year-Round Vacationland Supreme* (Los Angeles: All Year Club, 1925), pp. 18-27; *Southern California All The Year* (Los Angeles: All Year Club, 1924), pp. 2-9. The two best collections of All Year Club material are at the Urban Archives at California State University, Northridge, and the UCLA Special Collections Department.
17. *By-Laws of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce* (Los Angeles: R.W. Pridham, 1892), p. 1.
18. *The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce: Its Service to You and its Value to the Community* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1925), p. 5. The Chamber's view of its mission is best presented in: *What the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce Does for Southern California* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1900); *Exhibit and work of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1910); *Member's Annual* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1910), pp. 18-26, 51-52; J.M. Gwinn, *A History of California and an Extended History of Los Angeles and Environs* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1915), II: 94-97.
19. Stanley, *No Little Plans*, pp. 5-12; *Member's Annual*, 1910, p. 19; William Spaulding (compiler), *History and Reminiscences of Los Angeles City and County, California*, I (Los Angeles: J.R. Finnel, 1931): 282-283, 305-306, 318.
20. *The Member's Annual* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1925-1926), pp. 107-108; *The Member's Annual* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1928), pp. 51-52; "The World's Greatest City—In Prospect," *World's Work*, 47 (December 1923): 140-142.
21. The entire collection of photographs is now on file at the California Historical Society's History Center in Los Angeles. For details on its discovery and organization, see "L.A. of Yesterday: A Photographic Find," *Americana*, 8 (January/February, 1981): 77-80; Tom Zimmerman, "Paradise Promoted," *California Historical Courier*, 36 (April, 1984): 1, 4.
22. *Facts About Industrial Los Angeles: Nature's Workshop* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1924), p. 10; *General Industrial Report of Los Angeles, California and its Metropolitan Area* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1926); *Climate and Health in Los Angeles County* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1909); *Climate: What it Means* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1902). The best collection of Chamber of Commerce publications is at the California Historical Society's History Center in Los Angeles.
23. The most complete statement of the Chamber's position on aviation is *Los Angeles County Spreads Her Wings* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1929). Ford Carpenter's published essays are at the CHS's History Center in Los Angeles.
24. A general history of the automobile in Southern California is Mathison, *Three Cars in Every Garage*; Ashleigh



- Brilliant, "Some Aspects of Mass Motorization in Southern California, 1919-1929," *Southern California Quarterly*, 67 (June 1965): 191-208. All of the continuously published Chamber pamphlets, *Los Angeles: City and County* and *Los Angeles Today*, in particular, noted the various means of reaching the city.
25. The best general history of the inter-urban system is Spencer Crump, *Ride the Big Red Cars: How Trolleys Helped Build Southern California* (Corona del Mar: Trans-Anglo Books, 1962).
  26. *Los Angeles: City and County*, published between 1890 and 1919, is the best indicator of how the Chamber position on promoting agriculture changed. For its views on the harbor, see Board of Government Engineers, *In the Matter of the Location of a Deep Water Harbor in San Pedro or Santa Monica Bays* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1892); *The Port of Los Angeles: Its History, Development and Commerce* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1922); *Los Angeles Harbor as a Submarine Base Sight* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1920).
  27. *Los Angeles County, California: 150th Anniversary* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1931), p. 49. Examples of Chamber lures to industry are in *Los Angeles: The Chicago of the Southwest* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1904); *An Invitation to Buyers from the Market Place of the West* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1926).
  28. The photo essays appear in volume 120 (1928) of *The Independent: Cleveland*, January 7, pp. 11-14; *Kansas City*, February 4, pp. 107-110; *Los Angeles*, April 7, pp. 331-334; *St. Louis*, May 5, 1928, pp. 427-430; and *Duluth*, June 2, pp. 523-526.
  29. For detailed studies of the architecture of Los Angeles, see David Gebhard, Robert Winter, *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1977); Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973); Paul Gleye, *The Architecture of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Rosebud Books, 1981).
  30. Even those critical of the way Los Angeles was developing never failed to be amazed by its diversity and energy. See Louis Adamic, "Los Angeles! There She Blows!" *Outlook and Independent*, August 13, 1930, pp. 563-565, 594-597; Garet Garrett, "Los Angeles in Fact and Dream," *Saturday Evening Post*, October 18, 1930, pp. 6-7, 134-144.
  31. (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1905), p. 75. The Chamber radically altered its position following the Long Beach earthquake and published *Earthquake Hazard and Earthquake Protection* (Los Angeles, 1933).
  32. *Report to Mr. Asa Keyes, District Attorney, Los Angeles County, California on the Failure of the St. Francis Dam* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1928).
  33. The reading, "Los Angeles 200," edited by John Weaver, is printed in *Los Angeles 1781-1981: A Legacy* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles 200 Committee, 1981), n.p.
  34. Early photo books on the city include *Los Angeles and Vicinity* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1904); *Los Angeles and Vicinity* (San Francisco: Cardinell-Vincent, 1915); *Los Angeles, May 1, 1906*; R.B. Dickinson (compiler), *Los Angeles of Today: Architecturally* (Los Angeles: Kingsley-Barnes & Neuner, 1896); J.L. LeBerthon, *An Illustrated Souvenir Directory of Southern California* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Herald, [c.] 1904).
  35. (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1923), p. 8.
  36. *Official Tourist Guide* (Los Angeles: All Year Club, 1935), inside front cover, printed in bold-face type.
  37. *Sixty Achieving Years, 1888-1948* (Los Angeles: Chamber of Commerce, 1948), pp. 2-3.
- Daughenbaugh, "Anna Mills' Ascent of Mount Whitney," pp. 42-51.**
1. David Brower and Richard Leonard, "A Climber's Guide to the High Sierra, Part IV, Yosemite Valley," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1940, p. 41.
  2. Francis P. Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 15.
  3. Josiah Whitney, *Geological Survey of California* (1865), Volume 1, Geology, p. ix.
  4. William H. Brewer, *Up and Down California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 524-525.
  5. Geologist Clarence King, immediately upon arriving in California, joined the Whitney Survey as a volunteer. The ascent of Mount Whitney became an obsession with him. The day after Brewer and Hoffmann first observed Mount Whitney, King and the party's packer, Dick Cotter, set out to make the first ascent but climbed Mount Tindall instead. Later the same season, King made his second attempt, also unsuccessful. In 1871, he came back to Mount Whitney for a third attempt. This time, he believed he had made the first ascent. Bad weather and heavy clouds prevented him from seeing that, instead of Mount Whitney, he had made the first ascent of what would later be named Mount Langley. On his fourth and final attempt in 1873, he succeeded, but he was too late to be the first. He left the following record on the summit: "September 19, 1873. This peak, Mt. Whitney, was on this day climbed by Clarence King, U.S. Geologist, and Frank Knowles, of Tule River. On September 1st, in New York, I first learned that Mount Whitney of 1871 was not the highest peak. Storms and clouds prevented me from recognizing it, or I should have come here then. All honor to those who came here before me." Lieutenant George M. Wheeler, *Wheeler Survey Geographical Report. U.S. Geographical Surveys West of the 100th Meridian*, 1 (1889), p. 100.
  6. John Muir, "A Rival of the Yosemite," *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, November 1891, p. 93.
  7. Clarence King, *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872), quoted in University of Nebraska reprint, 1970, pp. 90-91.

8. Steve Roper, *Climber's Guide to the High Sierra* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1976), p. 247.
9. Bolton Coit Brown, "Wanderings in the High Sierra Between Mt. King and Mt. Williamson. Part II," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1897, p. 96.
10. Helen Gompertz LeConte, "High Water in Tehipite," *Sunset*, September 1902, p. 326.
11. Farquhar, op. cit., p. 228.
12. Helen Gompertz LeConte, "The Sierra Club in the Kings River Canyon," *Sunset*, July 1903, p. 251.
13. Obituary, "Mrs. Anna Mills Johnston Sinks Into Eternal Slumber Today," *Visalia Times-Delta*, June 25, 1921.
14. "Organization of the Mt. Whitney Club and List of Members," *Mt. Whitney Club Journal*, Volume I, Number 1, p. 37.
15. William Crapo was a local resident who made the claim that he and Abe Leyda were the first non-Native Americans to ascend Mount Whitney. When Clarence King finally reached the summit in 1873, he substantiated Crapo's claim but reported Crapo had made the ascent in the company of a Mr. Hunter. The claims and counter-claims made in this dispute constitute one of the more fascinating accounts in Sierra history. It is now generally believed that Crapo made the second ascent rather than the first. He was also a member of the third ascent team that was organized to obtain an accurate altitude measurement of Mount Whitney.  
In addition to guiding Anna Mills' party, Crapo was the guide for Samuel Pierpont Langley's party that was organized to observe and quantify the quality and quantity of the heat sent to the earth by the sun.
16. J. W. A. Wright, "In the High Sierras. The Grand View from the Summit of Mount Whitney," *San Francisco Daily Evening Post*, November 3, 1881.
17. W. W. Elliott, *A Guide to the Grand and Sublime Scenery in the Sierra Nevada in the Region about Mount Whitney* (San Francisco: Elliott and Co., 1883), p. 43-45.
18. Lincoln Hutchinson, "The Ascent of

'Matterhorn Peak'," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1900, p. 16.

19. In his own account of the trip, Judge Redd added to Miss Mill's description: "Of one thing I am satisfied: Neither of these can be the mountain that Satan took the Savior upon, nor this the country he showed him when he wished him to fall down and worship him; or, if it is, I don't blame him for not accepting the offer." Judge R. C. Redd, "Trip to Mt. Whitney, Kern River, Upper and Lower Lakes," *Visalia Times-Delta*, September 20, 1878.
20. "Seven Seals" liniment was used for various aches and pains.
21. Lieutenant George M. Wheeler was a member of the U.S. Army Engineers. He was in charge of a government survey that operated in the Sierra from 1875 until 1878. During 1875, members of the survey made two separate ascents of Mount Whitney, and, by triangulation, made the most accurate estimation of the altitude of Mount Whitney that had ever been made, 14,471 feet above sea level.
22. Anna Mills Johnston, "A Trip to Mt. Whitney in 1878," *Mt. Whitney Club Journal*, Volume I, Number 1, May 1902, pp. 18-28.

## Burgess, "Oakland's Water War," pp. 34-41.

1. The early history of the Oakland water supply appears in the author's Master's thesis, *The Early History of the Oakland Water Supply, 1850-1876*. (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1948).
2. *San Francisco Examiner*, August 16, 1895. During the 1880s and '90s numerous complaints of customer ill-treatment by Contra Costa Water Company appeared in newspapers.
3. No single work has been written on the public life of Dingee. The Oakland History Room of the Oakland Public Library has a number of references to Dingee.
4. *Oakland Times*, November 19, 1891; *Oakland Enquirer*, February 27, 1892; *San Francisco Examiner*, May 1, 1892; Articles of Incorporation, *Piedmont Springs Water and Power Company*, Alameda County Clerk's Office;

*Contra Costa Water Company v The City of Oakland*, Transcript on Appeal, In the Superior Court of Alameda County, California Supreme Court, 1901, pp. 1084-1088; *San Francisco Examiner*, January 31, May 1, 1892; *San Francisco Enquirer*, February 27, 1892.

5. *Enquirer*, February 9, 1899.
6. *Enquirer*, April 14, May 11, 1893; October 1, November 24, 1894; *CCWC v Oakland*, pp. 1077-1079.
7. *Times*, May 16, 1893; Dingee gave the city council a tour of the Alvarado works and told the council that he was going to pipe the water to Oakland regardless of the council's decision on a public distribution system. The newspapers indicated public support for the idea, but the council did not act.
8. Articles of Incorporation, *Oakland Water Company*, December 14, 1893; *CCWC v Oakland*, p. 994; *Enquirer*, February 5, 1898. *Times*, December 12, 1894; *Enquirer*, December 12, 1894. Dingee is reported to have sold the Piedmont company for \$1 million in cash and \$3 million in Oakland Company stock. He burned the Piedmont company's books after the sale.

The first report of sabotage of an Oakland Company main was made at this time on December 12, 1894.

9. *Enquirer*, February 20, March 10, August 28, November 29, 1894; *Tribune*, December 18, 19, 1894; *Examiner*, August 8, 1894; November 22, 1895.
10. *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 18, 1894.
11. *Enquirer*, February 26, 1895. *Tribune*, April 6, 9, 10, 1895; Letter, William Dingee to O. Feeney, 967-5th Street, Oakland, November 16, 1895.
12. *San Francisco Call*, February 28, 1895.
13. *Enquirer*, February 28, March 19, 1895; *Call*, March 1, 1895; *Tribune*, April 17, May 14, 1895.
14. *Tribune*, April 18, 23, June 6, November 18, 1895; Prof. W. B. Rising, College of Chemistry, University of California, to Henry Pierce, June 11, 1895; *Tribune*, June 12, 1895.
15. *Times*, *Enquirer*, *Tribune*, July 8, 1895; *Times*, July 9, 1895.
16. *Enquirer*, July 17, 1895; *Times*, July



- 18, 1895; Letter, Dingee to all Oakland Company subscribers, July 18, 1895.
17. *Enquirer*, August 2, 5, 1895; *Times*, August 3, 1895; *Tribune*, August 5, 1895.
18. Letter, Dingee, July 18, 1895, op. cit.; *Enquirer*, July 18, August 1, August 2, October 4, 1895; *Tribune*, July 29, August 12, 1895.
19. *Tribune*, October 20, 1896; *Times*, *Chronicle*, October 21, 1896.
20. *Enquirer*, September 25, 1897, January 7, 1898; *Tribune*, May 5, 7, 21, September 11, 21, December 4, 1897; *Times*, May 25, 1897.
21. *Enquirer*, January 7, 1898.
22. *Enquirer*, February 22, 23, 24, 25, March 1, 7, 1898. Most of the newspapers carried stories on the water rate situation during February 1898.
23. *Enquirer*, June 29, 1898; *Call*, July 7, 1898; *Tribune*, January 4, 1899.
24. *Tribune*, January 4, 1899; all major papers, February 8, 1899; *Tribune*, February 16, 1899; *Times*, February 20, 24; *Call*, January 20, 1899; *Enquirer*, March 4, 9, 22, 1899; Deed Book, *Oakland Water Company to Contra Costa Water Company*, May 12, 1899, Book 697, p. 101 (Alameda County Recorder's Office); CCWC v *Oakland*, p. 1531; *Enquirer*, April 11, 13, 1899; *Minutes of the Contra Costa Water Company 1900 to 1907*, pp. 51-54. At this time Dingee ordered the books of both companies burned, thus wiping out the original financial records of the companies. Most source materials for the history of the Oakland water supply before 1899 therefore come from newspapers or public documents. See CCWC v *Oakland*, p. 1528.
25. *Tribune*, February 9, 1898. During the council debates on water rates, Dingee stated, "I am here and cannot get away. If I could, why, great God, I'd leave tomorrow and take my company with me!" One of the councilmen moved that a collection be taken up for Dingee.
- Verbag, *Celebrities at your Doorstep*, pp. 29-30, gives a description of the house and an account of the Fernwood fire.
- Little is known of Dingee after 1900. Although he retained control

of Contra Costa Water Company for the next few years, he moved to San Francisco soon after the destruction of his Oakland home and bought a mansion at 1882 Washington Street, as well as two homes in New York City. He made his first million in Oakland real estate and water and later made more millions in the slate roof and cement industries. Dingee was also a San Francisco Park Commissioner under the Schmitz administration, which may have proved financially profitable. See *Tribune*, September 8, 1941; *Montclarion*, January 2, 1974.

# León and McNeill, *The Fifth Class*, pp. 52-57.

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- Irving G. Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites in California, 1849-1970* (San Francisco: 1977), pp. 4-25; *College of California Catalogue*, 1867-68, p. 34.
- State University Catalogue*, 1869-70, pp. 7-12.
- Rudolph, *American Colleges*, pp. 219, 267.
- William W. Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California* (Berkeley, CA: Sather Gate Book Shop, 1937), pp. 117, 89.
- Minutes of the Academic Senate, January 17, 1870, p. 3; Minutes of the Board of Regents, February 5, 1870, p. 127.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, April 12, 1870, p. 134.
- State University Catalogue*, 1869-70, p. 24.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, September 6, 1870, p. 161.
- Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of California*, VII (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890): 350; Verne

A. Stadtman, *The University of California, 1868-1968* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), p. 58.

- Minutes of the Board of Regents, December 22, 1870, p. 187.
- Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 36, 139.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, April 8, 1872, p. 250.
- University Echo*, 2, no. 4 (January 1872), p. 3.
- Minutes of the Academic Senate, December 31, 1870, pp. 44-46.
- Minutes of the Academic Senate, February 3, 1871, pp. 51, 62.
- Stadtman, *University of California*, p. 56; Minutes of the Academic Senate, December 20, 1871, p. 86.
- University of California Register*, 1871-72, p. 25.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, September 5, 1871, p. 224; December 12, 1871, p. 239; January 5, 1872, p. 243.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, May 24, 1872, p. 257; Minutes of the Academic Senate, June 10, 1872, pp. 103-104.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, July 16, 1872, pp. 262-63.
- Roy W. Cloud, *Education in California* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1952), p. 59.
- University of California Register*, 1872-73, p. 13.
- John Swett, *History of the Public School System of California* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Co., 1876), p. 232; Cloud, *Education*, p. 87.
- Swett, *Public School System*, p. 245.
- Minutes of the Board of Regents, April 12, 1870, p. 134.

# Hansen, Mitson & Embrey, Harry Ueno Remembers, pp. 58-64.

- The movie was based on Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston's novel by the same name (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973) and originally telecast by the National Broadcasting Company on March 11, 1976.
- Quoted in James D. Houston and Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, "Other Days of Infamy," *Mother Jones*, February-March 1976, p. 66.



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When the Allyne sisters of San Francisco died in the early 1960s they made sure that their wills reflected their belief in the importance of preserving California's history.

The most visible result of their legacy was the purchase of the imposing Whittier Mansion, which stands at the corner of Laguna and Jackson Streets in San Francisco and houses the Administrative Headquarters of the Society. But their bequest enabled CHS to do more. During the early 1960s a period of growth and expansion occurred within the Society, much of which was funded by the bequest: other buildings were bought and renovated, library collections were increased, essential staff members were added, and general expansion in Northern and Southern California was made possible.

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*Governor Edmund ("Pat") Brown's expansive liberalism met its greatest test during the Free Speech Movement at the University of California, the 1960 alma mater of his son (and future governor) Edmund, Jr. ("Jerry"). Edmund G. Brown Collection*



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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY



Upriver Boats to Red Bluff  
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Communists & Vigilantes in the Mines  
Unsung Hero of Girl of the Golden West

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# UPRIVER BOATS —

## WHEN RED BLUFF WAS THE HEAD OF NAVIGATION



*"After the river had widened into sandbar country, with its broad vistas between Colusa and Butte City taking so many graceful bends, the river closed again to its typical appearance of walled softness, punctuated here and there by a Goliath cottonwood, then again with a regimental array of tall trees."*

—Otis Oldfield, "Steamer Dover and Around-About," 1930<sup>1</sup>



by Edward Galland Zelinsky  
& Nancy Leigh Olmsted

**T**he Sacramento River is the artery that leads to the heart of California—a water highway, already in place before the Pacific had a name. Rising from Big Spring in Mt. Shasta, fed by the magnificent Pit and McCloud rivers from the northern Sierra, the Sacramento flows 580 winding miles to the Delta. Joined by the Feather River below Knights Landing and swelled by the American River above Sutters Fort, the Sacramento finds its way into the sinuous network of the Delta channels and finally into San Francisco Bay.

Knowledge of this vast web of tributary rivers and creeks was gained informally from personal exploration and hearsay among the trappers of the Hudson Bay Company who worked their way south from the Columbia River. When Captain Beechey arrived in San Francisco Bay in November of 1826 aboard the *H.M.S. Blossom* and constructed the first accurate and detailed navigational charts of the harbor, he questioned those who had accompanied Arguello in his efforts to explore the river in 1821 and claimed that they had “traced the Sacramento seventy or eighty leagues up, and that it was there very wide and deep.”<sup>2</sup> Just how deep and at what point was not possible to ascertain, for the Spanish had explored the river on horseback.

At Beechey’s insistence the British mounted a second expedition to extend his maps of the harbor and chart the two great tributary rivers of the bay. His successor, Sir Edward Belcher, bungled the task in 1837, when he could not locate the San Joaquin and pronounced it “certainly not navigable nor entitled to be named as a river in conjunction with its majestic neighbor.”<sup>3</sup> Using light boats from the *H.M.S. Starling*, Belcher reached 150 miles up the Sacramento; he could go no further and so determined that place to be the head of navigation and named it Point Victoria—a place since lost in history.

The Sacramento River remained a challenge with a significance not lost on nineteenth century explorers: rivers are the tools of discovery and their banks nurture the beginnings of settlement. Beyond this, the Sacramento’s tributary rivers—the American, the Feather, and the Yuba—meandered along, carrying the future of California in their gravel.

## HOW FAR UPRIVER COULD A BOAT TRAVEL?

Part of the extravagant reality of California's gold rush was the speed with which the gold seekers fanned out into every gully and stream. Reaching far up into the remote foothills, they established mining camps and instant towns with little more than what they wore on their backs, buckskin bags of gold dust, a hunger for essentials and a taste for luxuries. In San Francisco harbor, the packets of the world unloaded everything from Havana cigars to sperm candles, billiard balls to black powder, port wine to Colt revolvers, and looking glasses to fish hooks. All of the above, together with passengers coming and going, as well as heavy machinery ranging from printing presses to stamp mills, traveled this inland network of water highways. The most remote Sierra mining camp could enjoy the products of the world off the wharves of San Francisco.

A gold prospector could find his way from San Francisco north and east to the mines on foot or on horseback, but his lifeline of provisions had to be

Edward Galland Zelinsky traces his interest in Red Bluff to his research on his mother's ancestor, Joseph R. Galland, who in 1852 set up a general store in Red Bluff and was known as "Pea-Nut Joe." Joseph's brother, Samuel W. Galland, set up a saddle and harness shop in the same year. Mr. Zelinsky's fascination with riverboats grew in part from his great-grandfather's partial ownership of the *Gov. Dana* which ran to Red Bluff, as well as his interest in Northern California history. Mr. Zelinsky, whose great-great-grandfather arrived in San Francisco in 1849, is a member of the California Historical Society.

Nancy Olmsted based much of her writing on Mr. Zelinsky's extensive photographic and newspaper research on riverboats, supplemented by help from Otis Oldfield's historical manuscript on the 1930 voyage of the *Dover*. With her late husband, Roger Olmsted, she co-authored numerous studies on San Francisco history including *The San Francisco Waterfront* and the *Yerba Buena Center*.

packed in by mules or by water, or a combination of both. The existence of a water route, no matter how difficult to navigate, presented such an attractive commercial alternative to wilderness trails that the central question became, "How far upriver can a boat travel?" To be named "Head of Navigation" was to become the central loading entrepot for teams, wagons, and stagecoaches supplying hotels, saloons, dry goods stores, blacksmiths, harness-makers, express agents, preachers, gamblers, and ladies of the night.

North of Sacramento, Marysville served as the debarkation point for mines along the Feather and Yuba rivers. The way to the Trinity and Shasta mines lay further upstream at Colusa, Butte City, Tehama and Red Bluff—and, on occasion, beyond the Iron Canyon section of the river to Redding.

Traveling upriver to one of these towns meant navigating a river that was so changeable that the upriver trip was apt to be quite different from the return. On its upper reaches, the Sacramento followed an undulating course of bends, riffles, snags, and bars. This waterway changed continually as banks were eaten away by high water, levees collapsed in heavy rain, snags appeared overnight, and new channels were dredged—sometimes by the churn of steamboats' paddlewheels.

The story which follows is concerned with how Red Bluff became the head of navigation, with the poetry of the river itself, and with the attractions of life on and about the river, but most of all with the stern-wheelers and side-wheelers—little cargo carriers which would stop at the sight of a man waving his hat and load up almost anything: a ton of pumpkins, bags of spuds, a single horse or a pair of pigs, crates of chickens, baskets of eggs, fenceposts, shingles, or piles of bricks. Casual, cheap and generally dependable—like the cable car—river boats were, at first, the best and only way to move bulk cargo into California's remote north central counties.





The Jacinto (above) is a classic light-draft stern-wheeler, admirably suited to upriver traffic to Red Bluff. Built in 1889, she is shown here loading grain—most likely wheat to become “California’s white velvet” flour.

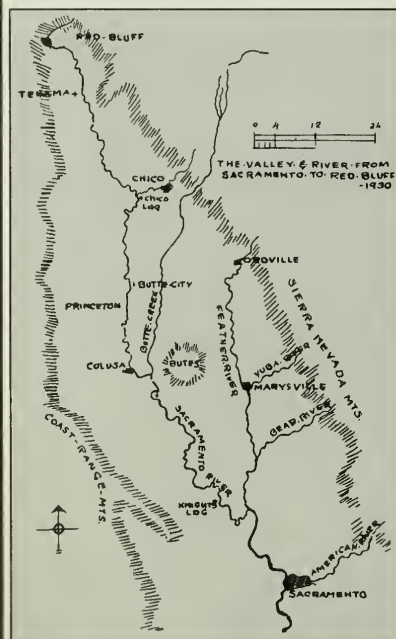
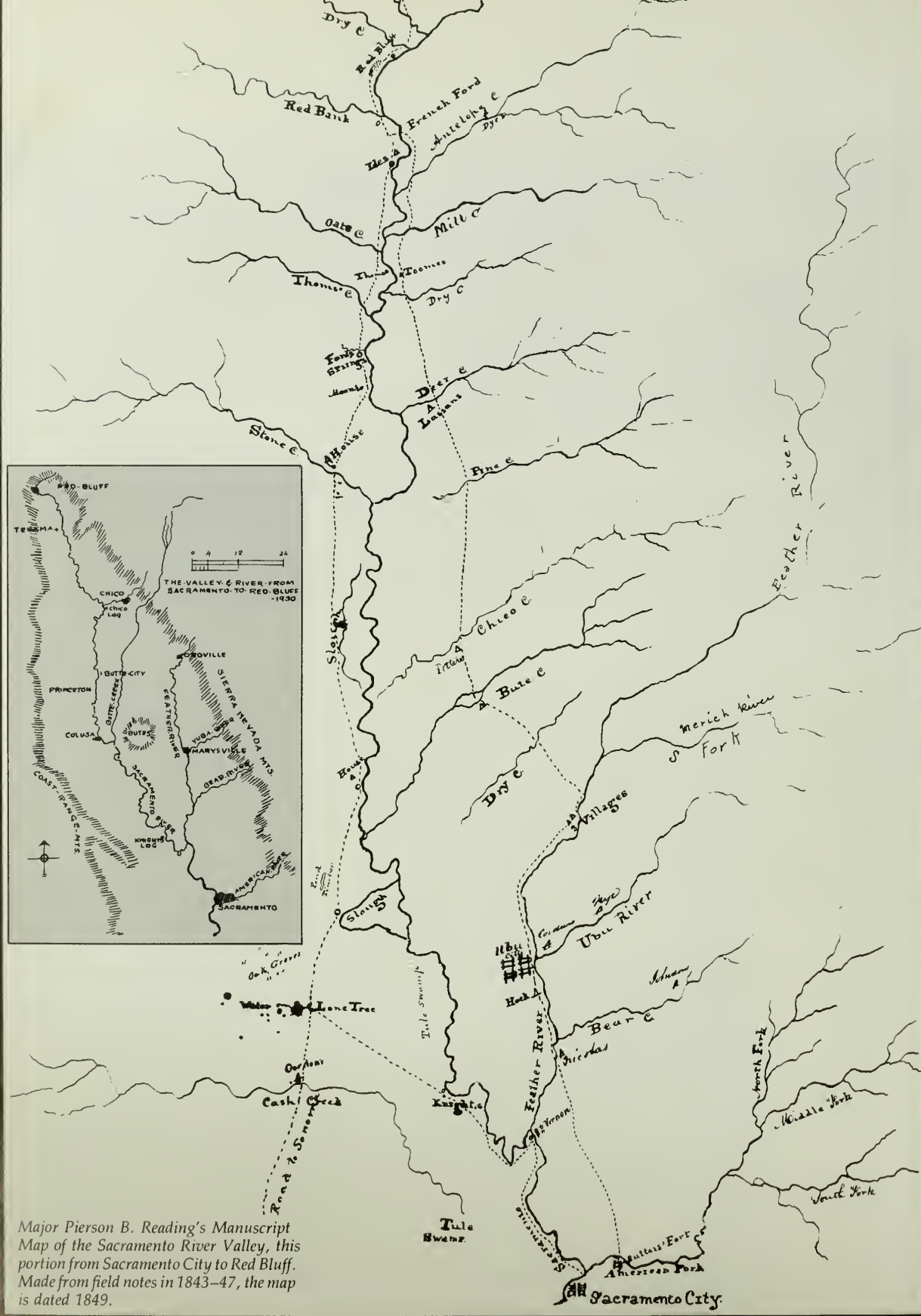
The Neponset No. 2 (right) gets up a head of steam just below Knights Landing, heading north with a load of provisions. She is a “trading boat”—a floating general store.

At the sound of her whistle, “people would pack their stuff into wagons and hurry forth, row over in a skiff, ready for bartering trade.”—

Otis Oldfield manuscript.

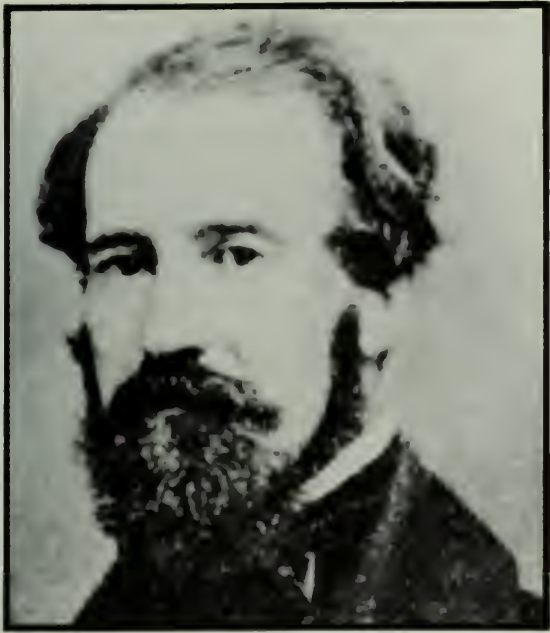


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Major Pierson B. Reading's Manuscript Map of the Sacramento River Valley, this portion from Sacramento City to Red Bluff. Made from field notes in 1843-47, the map is dated 1849.





*Pierson B. Reading  
by Rosens A. Giles  
(Oakland, 1949)*

## THE RIVER WOULD BE THEIR LINK TO THE WORLD

**T**he vastness of the Sacramento Valley's network of creeks and connecting rivers is best illustrated by a map drawn "from actual observation" by Pierson B. Reading. Reading first rode down through the Sacramento Valley to Sutter's Fort in 1843, part of the group that split off from the Walker party to enter California by way of the Pit River.

On January 24, 1844, Reading wrote his brother: "You have a map of the routes from my trips . . . I have taken much pains to have it as correct as possible. With California I am truly delighted. The atmosphere is so very pure and mild that bilious diseases are entirely unknown. The skies too, may vie with those of Italy, so cloudless and serene. As regards the soil, it gives a greater yield than I have ever known. . . . Wheat readily produces 60-70 bushels an acre. . . . I have ridden through thousands of acres of oats and red clover, growing wild and more luxuriant than I have ever seen under cultivation . . . On the chart which accompanies this journal you will find my initials marked on the west bank of the California River . . . This denotes my location in California . . . The Sacramento is navigable for steamboats some distance above my land."<sup>4</sup>

Just eight months later, Reading rode again through the upper Sacramento Valley to stake out his land

grant claim on the river. This time Reading was accompanied by John Bidwell and a party of would-be settlers: "Mr. Thomas selected five leagues of land south of Elder Creek, on the west bank of the Sacramento River. Mr. Chard took the same quantity, north of Elder Creek. Mr. Dye selected his land on the east bank of the river, opposite Mr. Chard's, and Mr. Toomes chose five leagues south of Mr. Dye's, on the east side of the river. Afterwards Major Reading selected his land north of Cottonwood Creek, in what is now Shasta County, and General Bidwell went on to become the owner of the celebrated Chico Ranch."<sup>5</sup> The men returned to the capital at Monterey to file their petitions for Mexican land grants which had one thing in common: their land fronted on the Sacramento River, their link to the world.

At first this handful of settlers brought up cattle to graze on the native pastureland of wild oats and red clover. In time, they built isolated adobe houses on the river bluffs. Reading set his four room adobe on an eminence overlooking not only the Sacramento but Cottonwood Creek and Battle Creek. It was a modest beginning for a grant of 26,632.09 acres, the Buena Ventura Rancho. But if the pace of development seemed slow, there was little reason to hurry—until 1848.

# FROM LONGBOATS TO STEAMBOATS: NAVIGATING THE RIVER — 1847–1850

**A**s trusted associates of Sutter, Bidwell and Reading had early knowledge of the gold discovery on the American River. Bidwell organized his neighbors at Rancho Chico to head north to pan the gravel of the Feather River. On the Fourth of July, 1848, he discovered gold lying in the natural riffles of the river at a place that would be known as Bidwell's Bar.

That same summer Pearson Reading found gold on Cottonwood Creek and decided to head northwest towards the Trinity River for some serious prospecting. He organized a large expedition using Indian labor, having earlier observed that "the Indians of California make as obedient and good servants as the negroes in the south." Reading's prospecting party consisted of "three white men, one Delaware, one Walla Walla, one Chinook and about 60 Indians from the Sacramento Valley, with 120 head of cattle and abundant provisions and tools." Following a route west to the Trinity Mountains, the mining party took out \$80,000 in gold in six weeks before they were stopped by a crowd of angry miners from Oregon, who were outraged at the size of Reading's party. (In the summer of 1848 two miners working together were thought an efficient organization.) Reading had made his pile and established the wealth of the Trinity mining region in the north.<sup>6</sup>

With gold to the north and east and provisions in San Francisco, Sacramento, or Marysville, depending on how you figured it, there was money to be made by developing supply lines to the mines. That fact soon became obvious to merchants, and teamsters, and anyone who could lay hands on a boat became active in the river trade.

One of the first was Sam Brannan, a particularly ambitious San Francisco entrepreneur. Brannan bought the *Gussonita*, a decked-over and schooner-rigged ship's long boat, from Jean Vioget for \$10,000 in 1848. Brannan put William Robinson Grimshaw in

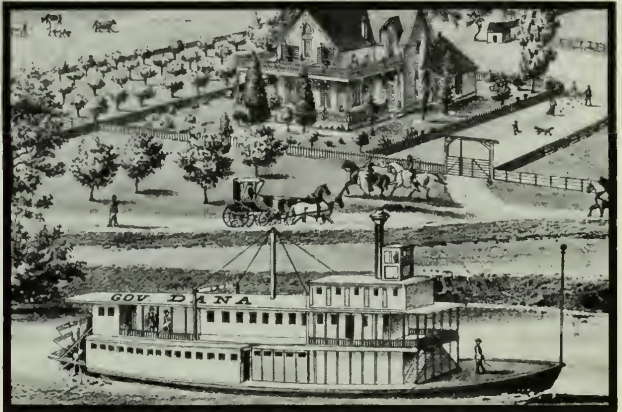
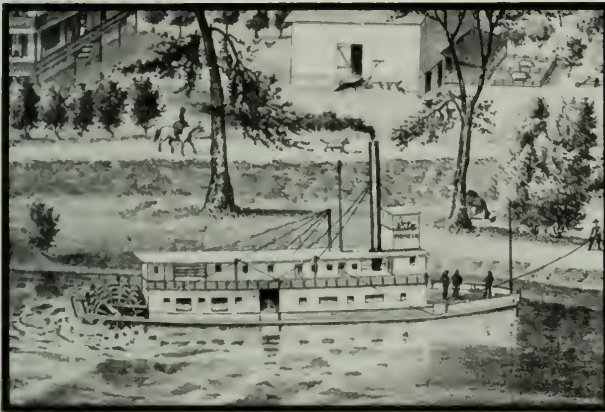
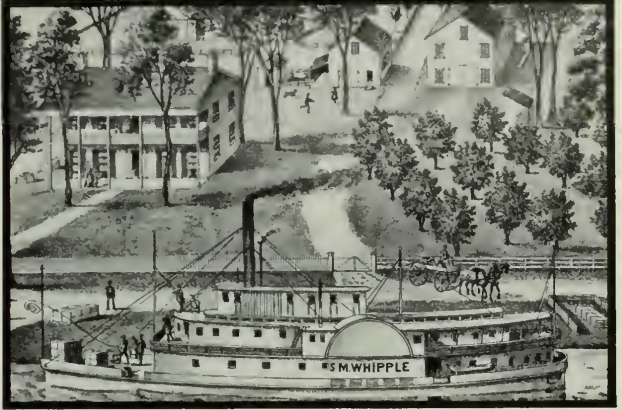
charge as a combination skipper-bookkeeper to carry passengers and freight north from San Francisco. This excerpt from Grimshaw's journal, written during the early rush of gold seekers up the river, gives a clear idea of the early difficulties of navigation:

"On our voyage to Sutters Embarcadero we passed one house at Benicia, Captain Cooper's; one at Martinez, somewhat pretentiously styled 'Montezuma' and Swartz's tule house, 2 miles below the Embarcadero. In passing through the narrow Steamboat Slough (then called Merritt's) the branches of the large sycamore trees . . . protruded from the bank far out into the river on each side . . . how difficult was navigation for a small craft, drifting with the rapid currents of the spring freshlets . . . At night the tules, west of the Sacramento would sometimes be burning and the elk and deer running, affrighted before the fire would make a rumbling like distant thunder.

"No description can do justice of a nighttime passed on the river in warm months. Clouds of mosquitos rendered sleep utterly out of the question. No matter how hard a man worked all day at the oar or otherwise, the only way of getting through the night was to build a fire that would make as much smoke as possible, and walk about until morning, flapping a handkerchief before the face . . . The great gold rush to California had set in. Every imaginable kind of craft from a whaleboat to the barque *Whitton* of 500 tons came up the river carrying passengers with their baggage. Boats were rowed up all the way from San Francisco. Many of these would enter one of the networks of the sloughs and row about for days before they were extracted from the labyrinth."<sup>7</sup>

The difficulty of depending on the vagaries of wind power to navigate the winding bends and changing channels of the Sacramento prompted early experiments with steamboats. Two of these attempts to steam up the Sacramento proved embarrassing to the ships' owners but deserve mention because they were the first.





In 1847, William Leidesdorff had purchased the *Sitka* from the Russians. Only 37 feet long, she was a stern-wheeler with an engine both feeble and noisy. According to John Kemble, she was so small that on her trial trip W.D.M. Howard (a man of ample proportions, as revealed by photograph) was required "'to occupy a post over the boiler to keep the steamer in trim'. . . and Mrs. Gregson's baby was handed around in the cabin as ballast. On November 25, 1847, the steamer left San Francisco 'to astonish the natives' and estimated her trip to Sacramento to be 20 hours under favorable conditions; but her trip on this occasion required six days and seven hours. George McKinstry went ashore seven miles below Sacramento and walked the remainder of the way, arriving seven hours before the steamer."<sup>8</sup> In February of 1848, the *Alta Californian* described her demise: "Little *Sitka* had as much as she could do to keep her head above the water long enough to say her prayers. She tossed and tumbled, became submerged and finally to the bottom went. The only evidence of her whereabouts was the plain view of her smokestack above the water . . . Thus perished the first steamer on the bay—a mere toy and most dangerous one, too."<sup>8</sup>

The *Lady Washington*, a stern-wheeler originally imported from New York and reassembled on the beach at Sutters Fort in September of 1849, was prob-

ably the first steamboat above the entrance of the American River. Like the *Sitka*, she sank, in this instance on a snag, but she was raised again and renamed the *Ohio*. It is not certain if she is the same "little steamer *Washington*" that Peter Lassen bought with his cattle in the spring of 1850 and which by some accounts took five months to reach Deer Creek. The steamer *Lawrence* did make it to Lassen's Rancho on Deer Creek under Captain Chadwick on June 8, 1850. The *Lawrence*, another eastern import reassembled in California, made the first run to Stockton in 1849 and the first run up the Feather River.<sup>9</sup>

With the side-wheeler *Jack Hayes* in the spring of 1850, Pierson Reading realized his ambition of steamboats operating above his ranch. Built in Benicia in 1849 as the *Commodore Jones*, she was lengthened to 87 feet and re-named for the famous Texas ranger who was sheriff in San Francisco at the time. The success of the *Jack Hayes* operating on the spring flood tide prompted the launching of the *Pierson B. Reading* on May 17, 1850. This second vessel in Reading's fleet was unusual for she had a propeller instead of a paddle-wheel.

By 1850 the Sacramento River's little stern-wheelers and side-wheelers were no longer a novelty but had become the beginning of a working transportation system.

## THE RACE FOR HEAD OF NAVIGATION IS ON—1850–1852

By the spring of 1851, the levee at Sacramento City teemed with excitement and confusion. Every size watercraft from rowboats and schooners through side-wheelers and stern-wheelers to barks and ships all arrived and departed, making connections with upriver boats and pack teams heading for the mines. A remarkable daguerreotype (far right) shows some square-rigged barks that had made their way from Europe and the Atlantic coast as close to the gold mines as their deep draft would permit, now serving as "storeships," convenient floating warehouses for provisions. Three steamboats, with flags flying, load and unload at the levee; one of them is the 83-ton side-wheeler, *Tehama*, her upper "Texas" deck rigged with a protective awning to accommodate extra passengers on benches. A note from the *Sacramento Transcript* dates this daguerreotype view at about March 12, 1851: "The *Tehama*—This fine little craft left our levee yesterday, completely laden down with passengers and freight. Captain High is one of the most obliging commanders in the river trade, and her agent, C. T. Weaver, Esq., is equally attentive in his department. The *Tehama* will be a regular craft on the river and as her passage is only \$5 [from San Francisco] she must continue to be the recipient of a large share of patronage."

In the foreground of the view, packtrains of mules with their top-hatted drivers are loaded with provisions for the mines. Rivalry was intense for the profitable trade, with teamsters and riverboaters making rival claims for reliability, economy, and speed. When the weather was good the trails for pack animals were open and teams were faster than boats. According to the *Sacramento Transcript* of 1850: "Vernon, a rivertown about 20 miles north of the City of Sacramento, marked the point where the river became extremely crooked. Because of this, goods were safer

when hauled by land than when hauled by river. . . . Many of the merchants own their own teams."<sup>10</sup>

Estimating that each person in the mining region required a pound of supplies a day, the *Sacramento Union* extrapolated that "once a day, one thousand mules, loaded with one hundred tons of freight, left for the mining region, this tonnage equivalent to two steamboat vessels."<sup>11</sup>

Understandably, the steamboat operators sought whatever part of this immensely profitable trade they could obtain. An agreed-on rate structure was crucial to their profitability so that they did not compete with each other; equally important was just how far upstream they could carry cargo before surrendering it to the teamsters.

The race for the head of navigation implied huge profits for those who owned tracts of empty land at various points upriver. Thus, in 1850, Colusa became the prime candidate for Dr. Robert Semple, a transplanted Mississippi riverboat pilot whose brother had bought the Colusa Rancheria from John Bidwell. Semple built the steamboat *Colusa* at Benicia in July of 1850 and made one triumphant trip to Colusa before she ran into trouble at Devil's Hackle and returned to San Francisco. Semple persisted and before long attempted to run the *Martha Jane*, a small side-wheeler, up from Sacramento to Colusa, early in 1851, but she struck a snag and sank.

The *Orient* was by all accounts the first steamboat to make a genuine commercial success of upriver traffic. Brought out from Maine for the Colusa-Sacramento run, she made it through to Red Bluff in November of 1851 and began regular trips on that route until November of 1852 when she, too, sank in low water. Raised and repaired, she continued to Red Bluff, carrying freight at \$100 a ton, as the only operating steamboat in that section of the river.





P.B. Reading was ready with the *Camanche* in 1852. On January 3, 1852, she made the trip up as far as Tehama: "The *Camanche* has performed the longest trip by steamboat ever made in California," said a newspaper account in the *Daily Union*. "The distance by water is . . . from San Francisco to Colusi . . . 140 miles, from Sacramento to Colusi . . . 145 miles and from Colusi to Tehama City 200 miles. The running time was 15 hours." The article continued: "The object in selecting this location is to extend as far as possible a water communication through the Valley

of the Sacramento . . . From the town of Tehama a road can be kept open and at all times traveled to Reading's Ranch and Tehama City . . . It is now estimated that there are at least 30,000 inhabitants in the Upper Sacramento and yet expressmen bring down information that there are not more than enough provisions in these places to last the inhabitants 20 days . . . Tehama is destined to be the Marysville of the upper valley."<sup>13</sup>

But Tehama's position as head of navigation was to last less than a season.

Two views of Red Bluff: On the west bank of the Sacramento River are the high bluffs, above the deep bend in the river. In this view c. 1895,

Dog Island appears as the triangle in the lower left. Red Bluff's familiar steamboat landing (below), just short of Centennial Bridge, was on the east side of the river.

Under the bridge was a fresh-water spring, a gathering spot for townsfolk who could greet incoming boats and collect a jug of springwater. In this view an unknown steamer has just pulled up to the loading wharf. The wood stacked on her deck was left-over fuel from her long trip upriver.



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# RED BLUFF BECOMES THE HEAD OF NAVIGATION—1853

A number of events combined to make Red Bluff the head of navigation on the upper Sacramento by 1853, not the least of which was the terrible winter of 1852–53. Weather always had an important influence on the provisions-carrying trade. As one writer observed, "Winter trade declined as trails were blocked by snow. . . . Spring was heavy because mountain towns had exhausted their supplies. . . . Freight declined somewhat during the summer, enough to maintain population. Fall freight shipments were the high point as mountain merchants began storing goods for winter."<sup>14</sup> But needed supplies had not yet been laid in when winter came early, on November 11, 1852, with torrential rains and continuous heavy snow. Then a fire in the warehouse district of Sacramento destroyed the remaining provisions available for shipment upriver.

Soon it became impossible for mule teams to get through the deep and treacherous snow in the foothills and mountain mining camps. The price of flour reflected the diminishing supply—\$8 a barrel in June climbed to \$34 by November.<sup>15</sup> But winter had just begun. By December 28, flour had reached \$198 a barrel in mining towns to the north, the same flour which sold for \$45 on the open market in San Francisco. Famine faced mining towns from Mokelumne Hill to Downieville, as men struggled through the snow to reach the beleaguered camps carrying 100 pound sacks of flour on their backs.

Snowed-in townspeople met to compose a letter to San Francisco papers: "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a people to protect themselves against want and starvation when they are in the hands of soulless speculators . . . we will go to San Francisco and obtain necessary supplies, peaceably if we can but forcibly if we must."<sup>16</sup> Bitter words could not be followed by direct action but they

vowed never again to let their lifeline of provisions depend on a mountain trail.

In July of 1853, a new wagon road opened from Red Bluff north to Shasta via Lower Springs, Canyon House, Clear Creek and Cottonwood. "This must be a fairly good road," observed the *Shasta Courier*, "for a seven-mule team hauled 9,361 pounds over it and six mules carried 8,473 pounds, an extraordinary load."<sup>17</sup> Roads were planked to withstand winter storms and the opening of twenty-two miles of track on the new Sacramento Valley Railroad had the taste of the future.

## SADDLERY AND HARNESS.

S. B. GALLAND,

Next Door to Levensohn & Galland,

WOULD respectfully return thanks to the public for the liberal patronage he has received since he commenced the Saddlery business, and would announce that he has on hand a large and complete assortment of



### HARNESS and SADDLES,

of all kinds and every style of finish in use.

### Bridles, Spurs and Whips,

And everything else usually kept in a first class Saddlery and Harness Shop.

His stock of all kinds of Saddlery is large and new, and of the most durable material. He keeps a number of experienced hands constantly employed on

### Custom Work and Repairing.

Thus ensuring promptness and satisfaction in filling orders.

Teamsters and others will find it to their advantage to call and examine before purchasing elsewhere. He hopes that by attention to business he will secure a continuance of their patronage.

Red Bluff, March 18, 1867.

tf

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The brothers Galland, Joseph, Samuel, and William, came to California in 1852, opening a saddle and hide business in Tehama, and a general store in Weaverville. In 1860 they moved their main business to Red Bluff, starting a provisions store "where besides saddlery they were large dealers in hides and grain." The Red Bluff family home at 210 Ash Street is still standing. Zelinsky Collection

# WAGONWHEELS & PADDLEWHEELS MAKE THE RED BLUFF CONNECTION

Until the spring of 1853, the town of Shasta was the central loading place for teams headed for the northern mines. Then, on June 14, Shasta burned, wiping out merchants, warehouses, blacksmith shops and virtually the entire business district. Red Bluff, situated forty miles to the south and boasting a viable steamboat connection to Sacramento as well as improved roads, quickly picked up Shasta's teaming business—and held it.

An astonishing early photographic view of Red Bluff (above right) shows what happened when teaming to the mines became the city's central business. In the background next to the Tremont Corral is the Tremont Hotel, built on the site of the 1851 Eagle Hotel which burned in 1861. (This would place the date of this view as no earlier than the summer of 1862.) In the welter of mules and teamsters stand five wagons loaded to their most profitable capacity, with wooden chairs strapped on top.

Being the central place of teams departing for mountain towns and mines spawned auxiliary businesses. For an idea of who the people might be in the view above, consider the 1860 census for Red Bluff: a total of 1,351 persons included 42 carpenters, 54 teamsters (plus others on the road), 21 blacksmiths, 6 physicians, 5 lawyers, 54 packers and 5 hotelkeepers.<sup>18</sup>

In January 1853, San Francisco's *Alta California* had predicted Red Bluff's place of importance: "We have before spoken of a trading post that has been established near Red Bluffs called Cavertsbury. It . . . commands an eligible and convenient position for all trading purposes, and is nearer the Shasta mining districts than any other point you can reach by water. Boats leave daily from this place [San Francisco] loaded with freight and passengers, and the town is

represented as being a thriving little settlement."<sup>19</sup> Here the *Alta* added comments from a Red Bluff correspondent: "We had the pleasure of welcoming the new and splendid steamer *Gazelle* with full cargo and assorted merchandise. Consignees—P. B. Reading, Todd & Jones, Fox & Co., Church and Mix, Cavert & Co. These houses have established at this point . . . and will be able to furnish traders with a general assortment, and judging from the appearance of business today, we cannot but come to the conclusion that a heavy trade is springing up at this place. We counted, on our walk from the landing to Red Bluffs, 140 pack mules and 15 team loads making their way to the interior . . . Steamers arriving included the *Orient*, *G. Winter*, *Fashion*, *Sutter*, *Daniel Moore*, *Express* and *Gazelle*."<sup>20</sup>

The mention of the steamboat *Express* is ironic, for it was the *Express* that U. P. Monroe had brought upriver the previous year to clear snags between Colusa and Monroeville. Using a windlass and anchor chains, Monroe spent a good part of his personal fortune to remove fallen trees from the river above Colusa and improving tiny Monroeville's chances of becoming a port for the lucrative steamboat business—only to see the newly increased trade steaming past his home port upriver to Red Bluff.

*Red Bluff was beginning to assume the accoutrements of civilization with its first brick schoolhouse (lower right), built in 1855 at the corner of Oak and Jefferson streets by V. P. Baker. The building cost \$3,000 and had a handsome bell purchased and brought upriver by Capt. J. S. Johnson.*

*The first brick building in Red Bluff was built by Bull, Baker and Company in 1853 as a store and a warehouse. By 1867, the time of this view (far right) the Brady Stables operated downstairs and the Sentinel newspaper office occupied the upper story. The ladies with their bonnets and bouquets are enjoying a barbecue put on by the Good Templar Lodge, in full regalia.*





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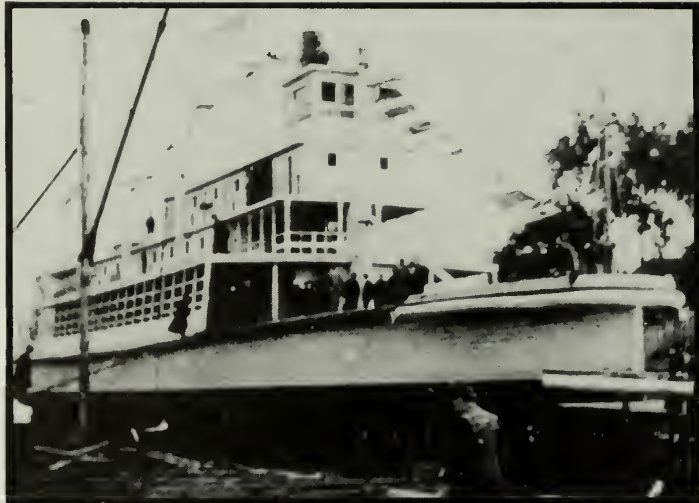


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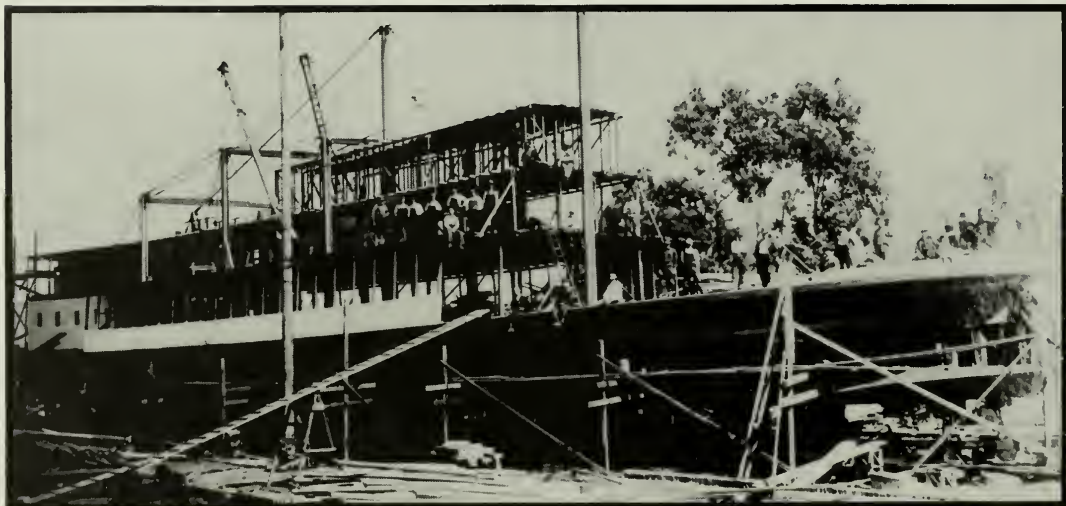


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## BUILDING THE RIVERBOATS

Many of the first riverboats were shipped in pieces to California from New York and Maine, to be reassembled and launched in time to cash-in on the lucrative gold rush trade. To put the boats back together again, shipwrights and ship carpenters set up their trade on the beach of San Francisco's Happy Valley where Domingo Marucci put the *Captain Sutter* together in six weeks. "Steamboat Point" appears on the first Coast Survey of San Francisco, published in 1853, and a small marine railway at the point juts out into the water from the foot of Fourth Street, marking the place where John G. North built every type of craft from Ralston's elegant yacht, the *Brisk*, to the grand floating palace, the *Chrysopolis*. Before he was done North built 53 steamboats and 220 other vessels, all launched from his informal operation that moved about as waterfront property was developed for other purposes.

Steamboats for the river trade were also built on available beaches and improvised marine railways at Benicia and Sacramento. The accompanying view (lower left) shows the large and centrally located marine ways at the town of Broderick, just across the river from Sacramento, where riverboats and barges were built, hauled out for repairs, and furnished a protected anchorage when not in service. Seen here are the *Flora*, the *San Joaquin No. 2*, the *Dover No. 2*, and the barge *Red Bluff*, in tow. Alongside the levee on the other side of the river lies the passenger steamer *Navajo*. The pilot houses of several moored barges appear on stilts just beyond the marine ways.

Steam winches were in operation at the time of this view c. 1920, but in earlier times a capstan and heavy ropes or chains pulled by horses or oxen eased rivercraft in and out of the water.

Although photographers were invariably present when boats were launched, few photographs exist of

the building of a riverboat, and even fewer descriptions of the process are available. Two views of the *Sacramento No. 4* (above & center, left) built in 1914 in the yards of Schultz, Robinson and Schultz in the south of San Francisco between Railroad Avenue and Hunters Point, give an idea of the process.

A stern-wheeler of 178 tons with a hull 178 feet long, the *Sacramento No. 4* was constructed from the ground up. Otis Oldfield's description of the process gives a clearer picture of what took place. "Oldsters say there were no plans drawn to build these boats. The Chief Carpenter who built them could tell exactly how much lumber went into them, all Oregon pine except for a few hard spots. There was oak in the fenders and iron-bark wood (bought by weight and used sparingly) in such parts as the spring brace and at the fenders around the waist . . . There was no steaming to bend the wood except for a little in the planking of the bow and the rake of the stern. . . . To build these steamers, the bottom planks were laid down and the bottom timbers spiked on to them and to those, the frames. Everything built up from that. It took about one hundred thousand board feet to build a barge and a little less for a steamer, most of it going into the hull. Some steamers were built in 30 working days. . . . Earlier packets [like the *Dover No. 2*] with their fanciness took a full month just in their fitting-out after the launching. . . . The Oldsters say the Chief Carpenter would call his men together and with an adz smooth the surface of a timber and figure the job right there with a piece of chalk, assigning to each man his part."<sup>21</sup>

At the launch party of the *Sacramento No. 4*, the photographer catches the owners and their guests on the bow just before she slides into the water on a windy afternoon. The flags are those of the Sacramento Transportation Company which had bought out the California Steam Navigation Company in 1882.



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## DOVER NO. 2— CLASSIC CONSTRUCTION

**T**he *Dover No. 2*, shown (above) on a summer excursion in about 1910, is a classic example of the shallow-draft riverboat. Built by the Sacramento Transportation Company at Broderick in 1891, she measured 150 feet in length and weighed 244 tons. Otis Oldfield's drawings made on one of the *Dover No. 2*'s last trips from Sacramento to Butte City in 1930 suggest some details about riverboat design and construction.

Starting with the bottom: the main deck contains the working engine room and boiler that generated the power for the paddlewheel. By the *Dover No. 2*'s time woodburning engines were a thing of the past, and big diesel fuel tanks stood on the foredeck, where cords of wood had been stacked on *Dover No. 1*. The freight room, with bunk beds for the crew, occupies the center of the main deck, and the aft section is devoted to the engine room and tillers.

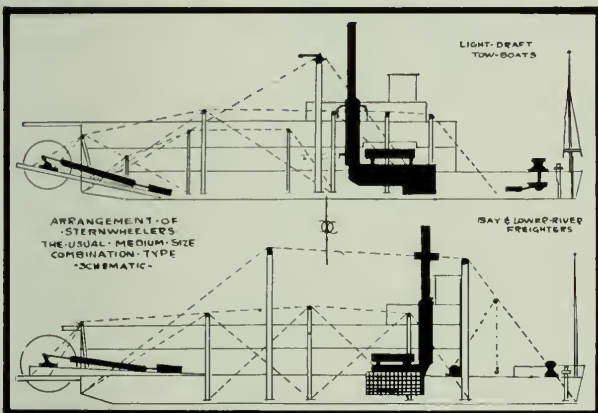
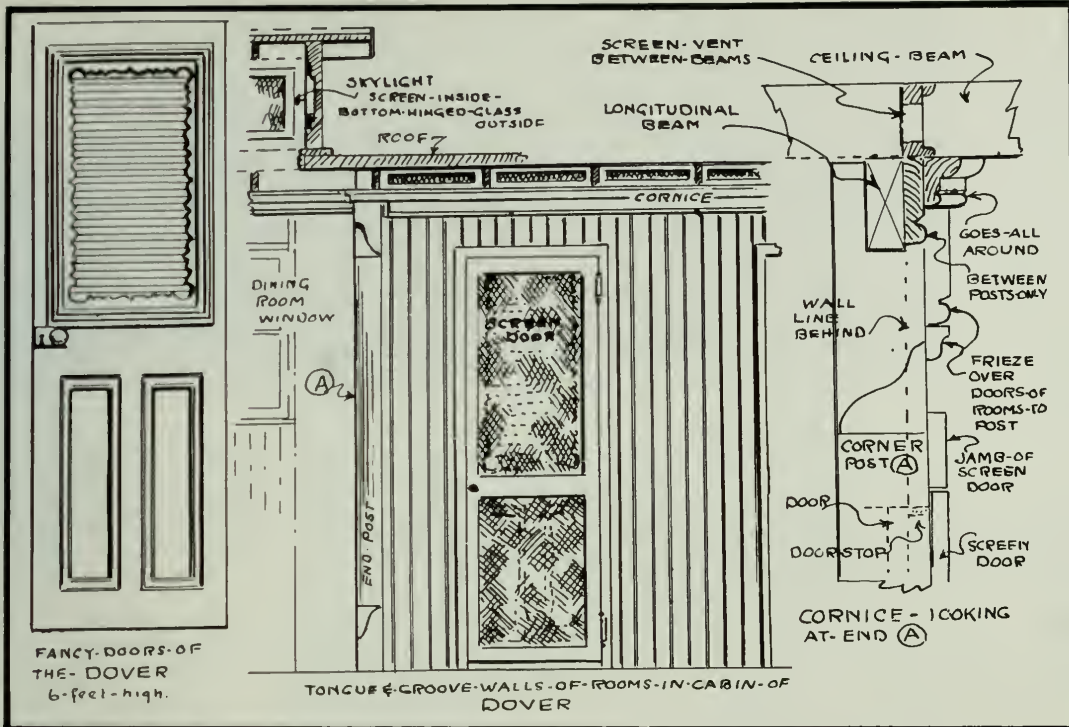
The ladies, wearing light summer dresses in the photograph, are enjoying the view from the passenger deck on a covered walkway around the hood of

the boiler where the tiller chains extend down from the pilot house two decks up above. The windows open from the galley, offices, and the central dining cabin which extended the width of the ship yet measures only 24 feet square. Four small cabins are available for passengers; beyond these cubicles is the open poop deck.

The "Texas Deck," above the passenger deck, holds the captain's quarters up front with a clear view directly up river, plus additional cabins for the barge pilot, pilot, watchman, line tender, chief and second engineer. Directly in back of the officer's quarters are the clerestory skylights above the dining cabin. (In the photograph folding chairs face downriver on the Texas deck, indicating the calm and pleasant ride available for those who preferred sun to shade.)

The top or "hurricane" deck is devoted to the pilot house about thirty feet above the water. Behind it is the spitting three-foot-in-diameter smokestack, and behind that is the powerful tow-mast with a web of stays spreading forward and aft.<sup>22</sup>





Otis Oldfield's sketches of the interior of Dover No. 2 (above) show the kind of finishing details that required an extra month to fit out the upriver craft after launching. The dotted lines on Oldfield's schematic diagram (left) show the "hog-chains" that ran diagonally throughout the boat to hold her up and together. "They were called 'hog-chains' and their supports were 'hog-posts'. . . . She was a great tow-er and had lots of iron rods running from aloft to the bottom timbers." —Oldfield manuscript, 1930

#### OTIS OLDFIELD—MARK TWAIN OF THE SACRAMENTO RIVER

Schooled in the modern art world of Paris during his youth, Otis Oldfield was lionized in San Francisco during the 1920s and 1930s for his paintings, which ranged from landscapes to portraits. Except for the appreciation of a few latter-day aficionados like art critic Paul Allman, who declared in the *Berkeley Gazette* in 1976 that "Oldfield . . . was, and is, an incredibly important man to our history," Oldfield has been forgotten.<sup>23</sup>

Oldfield's maritime work, however, looms larger as the years pass. The only artist of note to consistently examine San Francisco Bay and river shipping in the 1930s, he took voluminous notes and ships' measurements, made scale drawings, and sketched and painted waterfront scenes.

During the 1930s, Oldfield's maritime paintings won prizes and entirely constituted several one-man shows, including one in New York entitled "Steamboating on the Dover." Oldfield's trip on the stern-wheeler *Dover* in 1930 yielded twenty-nine watercolors (of which at least ten survive), the remarkable manuscript which accounts for fully a third of the sources in this survey of upriver

steamboating, and an invitation from the Union Fish Company to sail to Alaska on their codfish schooner, *Louise*, and give the voyage a similar visual examination. Oldfield's diary on the *Louise* and a selection of the watercolors resulting from the trip coalesced into a subject that in 1969 inspired the printing attention of Andrew Hoyem of Grubhorn-Hoyem Press.

Oldfield's manuscript of the *Dover*, as yet unpublished, illustrates the depth of his first love—small riverboats. The manuscript is a vivid account of the last days of steamboating on the upper Sacramento; it is replete with anecdotes of "oldsters" stretching back scores of years, undergirded by careful research, and profusely illustrated with Oldfield's own exacting scale drawings and abstract impressions. It is a monumental recording of both technical details and human interest, making Oldfield the Mark Twain of the Sacramento River.

—David Hull, Principal Librarian,  
National Maritime Museum at San Francisco



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## RIFFLES, SNAGS & SHOALS: NO TWO TRIPS WERE THE SAME

Riverboat pilots have left no accounts on the art of navigating the Sacramento River. For that reason the conversations Otis Oldfield recorded with the "Oldsters" in the 1930s are particularly valuable. The riverboatmen he talked to were men educated in the river's ways for more than sixty years, men whose active piloting extended back to the 1870s.

Writes Oldfield, " 'One must read the river,' the pilot said, 'One must know what lies beneath each ripple, whether wing-dam, shoal-water, snag, bar or channel, all of it continually changing.' It was an uncharted course where the channel is not necessarily the center of the river, where compass and chart are useless and a perfect knowledge of all obstructions and conditions must be known, for at night such things are not easily seen."<sup>25</sup>

On shoal sections of the river, Oldfield learned, two bow-men took their places on port and starboard, pushing their marked-off twelve-foot poles forward and then catching them, to call out soundings. "10 and a half, 9, 4, 6, bottom." The pilot then needed to interpret this strange duet; in places one side of the boat could be at "bottom" and the other side at 2 feet.

River-work had its own vocabulary. "A riffle is what you call a bar but there is a deep hole in it and that makes channels," wrote Oldfield. "The only way to cross a riffle is straight through the middle. To cross it—sight a tree and take a line to it, either up on the bank, or send a skiff. Then work your line to keep it taut, and when the boat is on the riffle, go backwards because otherwise the wheel would throw water back from you and leave you stuck there. How's that for going ahead backwards?"<sup>26</sup>

Oldfield continued, "Over yonder was a difference in the water, smooth and ripply. One is current-caused and the other eddy-caused, by different formations of the river bottom. And over here is a shoal

water. . . . Everything is written clearly upon the river; gravel or sand indicate the changeable part or the permanent part. Sometimes banks change entirely, having been eaten away during high water. . . . The up-trip shows one thing which may be entirely different on the return."<sup>27</sup>

Snags formed a deadly obstacle course for riverboat navigation. Fires and explosions were relatively rare on upriver transportation, but sinking from snags was fairly common. Boats were raised again as a matter of course, however, and put back to use. The *Seizer* (above), a government-owned snag boat with a long history of successful debris removal, returns from a snagging expedition with a trophy. Usually the *Seizer* made three-month trips to clear the river, towing a debris barge. Snag boats were identical to sternwheel freighters except for the addition of a towering boom on the bow used to lift up large snags.

*The Paintersville bridge lowers its arms over the wake of the San Joaquin No. 2 (opposite, top) as she moves along a wide stretch in the river. Built by the Sacramento Transportation Company in 1875, the intrepid San Joaquin No. 2 pulls the barge Ohio with a load of fuel tanks and the barge Serrana.*

*(Opposite, 2nd from top) With three toots of her whistle, the Red Bluff No. 3 signals for the railroad bridge in Sacramento to swing aside and let her steam through, towing a barge or two in her wake. Built in 1894, Red Bluff No. 3 weighed 294 tons and was 150 feet long. Riverboat men considered her one of the finest performing boats upriver.*

*The Flora No. 2 (opposite) maneuvers close to the elegant I Street Bridge in Sacramento City's busy channel, past the large passenger steamers, the Pride of the River and the Capitol City, as the skipper of the diminutive Picket takes in the scene. The man in the white shirt on the fantail of the Pride of the River suggests the scale of the steamer's paddlewheel.*

*(Opposite, bottom) The Neponset No. 2 steams along at about four miles an hour, past the grain warehouses at Butte City. The angles of the river are such that she appears to be heading directly into a feathery bank of willows and cottonwoods. Built in 1884, the Neponset No. 2 became a produce boat operating in the delta sloughs and met her end when she hit a snag, sank, and was covered with sand before help could arrive.*





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ZELINSKY COLLECTION

## BARGES KEEP STEAMERS AFLOAT

Even though experience on the East Coast in the 1850s had proven that the addition of a single barge could triple the cargo load of a steamboat, steamers towing barges in the fast currents and around the narrow bends of the Sacramento River had difficulty with tow lines becoming tangled in their paddlewheels, and barges remained rare on the river throughout the decade.

Captain John Ferris, master of both of the *Gazelle* in the 1850s and the *Apache* in the 1890s, is thought to be the first to devise a tow-mast that elevated a line high enough to clear the paddlewheel and allow his sternwheeler to pull her barge from behind, a far more manageable position than attaching the rope alongside. The tow-mast was positioned just aft of the center of the steamer and only the smokestack was taller.

At first, towing lines were 8-inch manila rope, but they were so heavy when wet that steel cables (used for everything in California from mining machinery to cable cars) were substituted. Steel springs were attached to keep the lines taut and take up the slack as needed.

With the introduction of the tow-mast and multiple barge trains, the steamers became an economically viable means of transporting bulk cargo. This became more important as the growth of farming in the Sacramento Valley made downriver freighting of grain as important as upriver shipping of provisions. By 1861, downriver freighting equalled upriver shipments,

and by 1869 downriver cargo surpassed upriver cargo.

The first upriver barges were small, weighing 33 tons and measuring about 80 feet by 16 feet by 3 feet deep. The draft on upriver barges ran from 18 to 24 inches. Early barges were without names, compliments to the steamers that towed them; later, the smaller barges were named for river ports and the larger ones for states. By 1890 a barge could carry 1000 tons of cargo—and until the 1930s barges kept river steamers economically afloat against the competition of the railroads.

*The tow-mast in operation: the San Joaquin No. 2 (above) tows a sister steamer, possibly the San Joaquin No. 3, which in turn tows three barges in her wake. Built in the mid-1870s both steamers regularly performed feats of towing—as many as 5 barges at a time when a single barge measured 5½ railroad boxcars long.*

*The San Joaquin No. 4 (opposite, top) built in 1885, steams smartly along on a calm river with three barges in tow. Oldsters on the river gave her the highest compliment, according to Oldfield: "San Joaquin No. 4 is the strongest stern-wheel tow-boat on the Pacific and unequalled in strength."*

*In a Gathering of Barges (opposite, bottom) at the levee in Sacramento c. 1928, the Illinois weighing 460 tons and carrying 1000 tons of grain, hold sacks stacked five high to the shoulder height of the barge crew. The barge pilot climbs a ladder to enter the pilot house which is built high enough to command a clear view of the river and the steamer ahead. An unknown steamer noses her bow, loaded with grain stacked seven sacks high between the Montana and the Illinois. The white boom on her bow is lined up with the dark tow-mast of the Jacinto in the background, giving the illusion that the two are somehow connected. In the background, the barge Virginia is also stacked with grain, and, alongside, the barge Vermont floats empty.*







NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM AT SAN FRANCISCO

## WORKING ON THE RIVER

Working on the river meant two kinds of work. First there was the continuous and often difficult art of navigating the boat and her barge, which required constant vigilance of the separate crews. On the steamer there was the pilot, the captain (who had been a pilot himself), and the bow men who called out the depths to the steamer pilot, who was in touch with the engineer and fireman in the engine room three decks below. They communicated by means of a gong, a bell, a whistle, and a voice tube for spoken commands. All the signals were understood by the barge pilot who steered his cumbersome craft from his stilt-legged pilot house. The captain and the steamer pilot spelled each other, assisted by a cub pilot. Before he could apply for his pilot's ticket, the cub took his turn at the wheel for three years and mastered the river so that he could draw from memory every wing-dam, bend, landing, and curve on the river. So accurate and finely tuned were these navigators' senses that they used echoes from land objects at night or in the tule fog to judge distances. The story is told of a captain who regularly pulled his whistle after rounding a particular bend to judge his distance by the echo bouncing off an unseen barn. One night there was no answering echo, but he continued on, certain he was on course. At the next landing he learned that the barn had burned since his last trip.

The second kind of river work—the heaviest and hardest of all—was accomplished under the command of the first mate. This was loading and unloading cargo with the help of four barge loaders and four steamer deckhands. Cargo handling changed little between the 1850s and the 1900s.

Captain John Leale recalled loading in the 1850s and '60s on a Sacramento riversteamer: "Above Rio Vista it would be about ten minutes between landings for discharging freight. . . . We would immediately

*The crew of the Colusa (above) pose for their picture. Since the Colusa did not tow a barge, this crew includes the captain, pilot, first mate, a clerk, and two engine room hands. The others are deckhands for handling cargo.*

begin the return route from Clarksburg, making as many as 65 landings. I have seen one thousand baskets of peaches to go on one landing and I have also seen six. When we struck a watermelon pile, the men would line up and throw to each other, and it was never a "shirk" that did the picking up, for this was a back-breaking job. . . . Then would come the sweet potato pile, which had to be packed in on a single plank with perhaps the weight of the whole sack resting on your shoulder blade by one "sweet." The large tomato boxes would get to be a bit heavy before night. I must mention that cantaloupe were not crated but like watermelons had to be picked up singly."<sup>31</sup>

Loading grain with chutes from waterside warehouses was equally difficult and apt to happen any time of the day or night. This was the central crop of the valley from 1861 through 1920, and Old-field's description of night loading at Butte City's grain chute is a classic:

"The searchlight was played on the bank to find some old ropes fixed to scrawny roots among the foliage of the bank, so dense that I wondered what we could be doing there. The long chute was sent up, extending from the barge to some obscure platform away up on the bank, at least 75 feet distant. . . . Part of the crew trucked the grain to the platform and sent it down the chute 'a-flying' where other men caught it, loaded it five sacks high on a hand truck which was pushed in the darkness and piled somewhere on the barge. . . . The cargo was set methodically in rows, first one side and then another, a line of five sacks high. . . . It was a great sight to see these flitting figures, darting from gloom into the restless blaze of their torches, while on the boiler-deck of the steamer, in complete obscurity, lying on his





(Above) Oldfield recounts: "Wood cargo could be loaded about 15 or 16 cords per hour, and 230 cords loaded in a day was a record . . . Wheat came on fast—five to eight hundred sacks per hour. . . . To unload heavy and bulky freight like machinery could take half a day. . . ." Otis Oldfield manuscript, 1930

A crewman takes a moment's rest in the sun aboard the Red Bluff (right). Temperatures on the Sacramento River got as low as 19 degrees on winter mornings, and the pumps, cylinder-cocks, and pipes in the engine room might freeze. Summers saw the thermometers reaching 114 degrees without a breath of air stirring. But the work of loading and unloading went on. It made no difference if it were Christmas Day or Thanksgiving.

barrel-belly in a comfortable hammock, the fat mate watched. . . . It was a long distance to command but he could cuss loud enough to be heard across the river. Toward 10 o'clock the work stopped and the men flocked to the tables. . . . The clerk, at the door with the mate who grumbled about rotten sacks, told me of the wages of the crew, their overtime and extras. Still, he confessed, they didn't get a terrible lot. . . . most of the men generally owed all they were ever paid before they got it, having lost it in a crap game which is their pastime aboard, and the company provides them with food and bunk which is about all they ever get. Even if they have a good game they will spend it in some blind-pig ashore in an evening.<sup>32</sup>

Food was ever a preoccupation for the men, and the cook and his helper, frequently both Chinese, served enormous portions after every work shift and at regular meals as well. "At breakfast ham and flap-jacks were served with bread and biscuits—a big slab of ham and a flap-jack as thick as a plank—the two articles over-lapping the platter at both ends. . . . The officers seemed to eat at all times . . . the skinny barge-pilot putting away a dozen eggs, shortly after breakfast, too. . . . They don't seem to be fazed by ample repasts served at six, twelve, six and midnight."<sup>33</sup>



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM AT SAN FRANCISCO



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, S.F.



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## PLAYING ON THE RIVER

**O**n hot summer days in the Sacramento Valley, what better way to enjoy a breeze was there than to move along the river at two miles an hour between the wooded banks. Workboats became pleasure boats on every holiday from early spring to the Fourth of July. Church picnics, blackberry excursions, company outings—any excuse to ice the beer, cool the wine and dress up for the occasion.

The *Valetta* (top), shipped to the coast from Ohio to serve in the Klondike gold rush in 1898 but diverted for service on the Sacramento, is seen awash with starched petticoats and flowered hats. The *Varuna* No. 2 (right top) seems to slide along on glass on a still summer afternoon around 1904. The ladies remain on the main and passenger decks, and the gentlemen lounge on the Texas and hurricane decks. Framed for a moment by a single tree, the smokestack shrinks the figures to a diminutive and fragile scale.

Along the river, boats were always around, even in

a parade. On the Fourth of July in Red Bluff in about 1899, W.R. "Bill" Hughes and his parasoled ladies (right middle) ride under the biggest American flag in town and smartly move along on wheels a sample of the Hughes wooden-boat building expertise. A local historian recorded, "It was the custom for Red Bluff and Redding to celebrate together on alternative Fourth of July years. . . . These occasions were celebrated by elaborate parties and usually culminated in a water fight staged by the hose cart fire department representatives of each city."<sup>34</sup>

If you weren't on the river you could always get close by it with family picnics and a fishing cabin, just a buggy ride out of town. The Hughes and Runyon families broke out wine on a family outing in 1898 (above). "Bill" Hughes poses with the Fish and Nottleman families and a load of fishing rods on the back of the buggy (right bottom). As family photographer, Charles Hughes enjoyed all of the occasions from behind his camera.



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## RED BLUFF COMES OF AGE— 1871–1893

By the 1870s, civilization, culture, and respectability had come to Red Bluff, the head of Sacramento River navigation. In three decades the raw frontier look of a temporary provision and teaming center with riverboat connections had been replaced by the sleepy if stable respectability of a farming center. Here, people invested money in the land which produced the wheat that made its way on river barges, railroad cars, and sailing ships to the markets of Europe.

The Tremont Hotel (*left below*), seen in an earlier view in 1862, appears to have just re-opened in 1893, so fresh are the gilt-lettered signs. The contrast could hardly be greater between the brawling teamster scene of only thirty years before and these well-dressed lawyers and landholders, merchants and gentlemen farmers. The rebuilt three-story hotel with its graceful ionic columns, classic frescoed arches and handsome balustrades bearing Italian urns held its own (in the opinion of Red Bluffers) with any European spa.

The men who had witnessed these changes are seen in another view (*left above*), taken in about 1890, posed in the entrance of the resplendent Cone and Kimball Building that adjoined the Tremont Hotel on Main Street. A penciled note in the late Judge Gan's scrapbook identifies the man on the far right (with his elbow against the column) as G.G. Kimball; the portly man in the white suit is Joseph Cone. Continuing from right to left, beyond the shirt-sleeved Bert Palmer is a bearded gentleman, R.H. Blossom.

Robert Hurd Blossom rode a mule across the plains from his native Ohio in 1852. He tried his hand first at mining and then at hotel keeping in Red Bluff. By 1871, when land prices averaged about \$1.60 an acre, he bought Antelope Rancho, a magnificent farm of

10,000 acres on the Sacramento River watered by Antelope Creek. By 1879 Blossom harvested a phenomenal forty-four bushels of wheat to an acre, the average yield being twenty-five. That year Antelope Rancho cleared twenty thousand sacks of wheat and four thousand sacks of barley, not to mention two thousand gallons of wine, and strawberries, blackberries, cherries, apricots, peaches, apples and pears from his extensive kitchen gardens and orchards.<sup>35</sup>

White-suited Joseph Spencer Cone arrived in California in 1850 with a pony and a mule. He worked as a teamster and later raised cattle on government land. In 1869 he borrowed money to buy Rancho Rio de los Berrendos, 14,000 acres on the Sacramento River opposite Red Bluff. Profits from his ranch led to the establishment of the Bank of Tehama County and made him one of the leading merchants in Red Bluff.

Less is known about his partner, Major G.G. Kimball, who built the three-story brick and stone edifice that stood on the corner of Main and Walnut. It was Major Kimball, however, who restored Red Bluff as head of navigation by an important political move.

In 1871 the railroad arrived in Red Bluff amid the cheers of at least some of the people who had grown weary of what the *Red Bluff Independent Beacon* referred to as "mud-wagons and that other played-out means of locomotion, yclepted steamboats."<sup>36</sup> The next few years saw Red Bluff plunged into the depression that hung over all of California. No steamboats made it to Red Bluff from 1871 until August of 1880 when Major Kimball "eloquently presented" a petition to the Chief Engineer of the United States Army to re-open the river. The Corps of Engineers responded with the snag-boat *Dover* which was greeted by salutes of guns from enthusiastic merchants and townspeople. Once more Red Bluff was officially the head of navigation, and it would remain so until 1920.



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## LAST DAYS ON THE RIVER

Still, the riverbanks in 1929 were a "jungle of shrubs and trees with overhanging branches and climbing grapevines"; this dreamy summer afternoon on the river, nosing along at two miles an hour on the *San Joaquin No. 2* (left top), was an experience to be savored, remembered, and perhaps not seen again.<sup>38</sup> Old timers might recall earlier and more elegant occasions with the boat "in holiday dress and the guests in full regalia, with a band to sharpen enthusiasm" and sense the closing of an era.

An aerial view of the river at Sacramento (left bottom) perhaps a year later, shows a lone sternwheeler with barges in tow on a nearly silent river. Government dredgers work upstream, but the rest of the riverboats are at the yards in Broderick, between the bridges on the east side of the river. The spreading railroad yards to the west account for some of the river's silence, but the unseen hand of the great depression pushed down farm prices and put economically marginal transportation like riverboats in an even more tenuous position.

By 1930, upriver traffic went only as far as Butte City, and each trip of the *Dover No. 2* or the *Red Bluff No. 3* was rumored to be her last before being laid up at these yards, the place where both were launched in the 1890s. In this aerial view five river steamers are

laid up beyond the shipways at Broderick and one sternwheeler is hauled up on the ways for inspection and repair.

An eye-level view of the Broderick yard at Sacramento (above) in about 1931 shows the laid-up riverboat fleet: the *Red Bluff No. 3*, *Dover No. 2*, *San Joaquin No. 4*, and *Colusa No. 2*, and an unknown barge are on the beach. In the background are two more smokestacks, possibly those of the *Flora No. 2*, the *Jacinto*, or the *Sacramento No. 4*. When boats fall on hard times the evidence is seen in their rotting hulls and broken windows, but even more drastic are the make-shift attempts to turn them into something they were never meant to be. The *Colusa No. 2* (seen earlier on her proud launch day in 1912) has been given a false square chimney of brick tar paper over her smokestack and the indignity of tar-paper over her ship-lap exterior from the pilot house to the Texas deck and the main deck below. Her open sides meant to accommodate freight—she was one of the few riverboats designed to carry her load onboard rather than pull barges—have been filled over and "bricked up." The giant boom on her bow that was designed to lift cargo is still in place, as is the small skiff on her passenger deck. Running lights and necessary gear remain on all the boats, but they are in retirement. The fleet is silent, never to run again.



EDWARD ZELINSKY COLLECTION

## THE NIGHT OF AUGUST 28, 1932

It was as if the men who worked on the riverboats were loath to leave the fine rivercraft they understood so well; or perhaps it was that they had nowhere else to live. In 1930, Oldfield observed that the old engineers from the *Red Bluff* lived onboard the laid-up ship, "content with their lot, to tinker with engines and pump out barges and boats . . . The *Red Bluff*, they claimed, was in good condition and could be run for a long time. . . . They had surrounded themselves with their kind of interesting souvenirs. The long tables were littered and there were plenty of newspapers and a cribbage board. . . ." <sup>39</sup>

No one knew just how the fire of August 1932 broke out. Certainly the big oil tanks on board the laid-up fleet were likely suspects; even though they were drained, the fuel's fumes were hazardous. It was the biggest fire that anyone in Sacramento could remember, lighting up the August night sky by the levee and the boatyards, with the riverboats burning like torches reflected in the water.

"The vessels as they burned commenced to float off, carrying their deadly torches to other parts. The

*Flora*, like a frightened creature, actually went upstream and lodged against the railroad bridge and stuck there, starting blazes on the wooden pilings at the base and in the ties above."<sup>40</sup> This, at least, the firemen from Sacramento could handle—save the bridge and let the *Flora* burn. Broderick was in Yolo County and the Sacramento Fire Department could only protect their own levee on the west side and watch the waterfront shipways across the river burn all night long.

Of the entire mothball fleet of eight riverboats, only two were hauled out from where they sank, the *Dover* No. 2 and the *Red Bluff* No. 3 (above). Others that sank could have been salvaged, had times been better and the need for their services more evident. Beached high out of the water, the two sole survivors of the terrible fire sat in the weeds for nearly seven years. Then they passed from the hands of junkyard dealers who stripped them of their iron and metal fittings and turned them over to wharf rats who finished the job, removing the wood to mend waterfront shanties and burning the rest. □

(See notes beginning on page 161.)

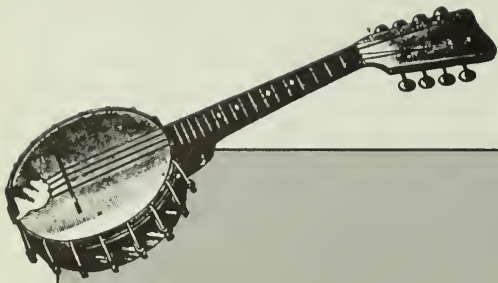




Because the *Josie Lane* was elsewhere on the fiery night of August 26, 1932, she became the sole operating cargo steamboat on the Sacramento and made her final trip to Red Bluff in 1936, the last steamer to call. Built in 1916 as a gas-powered stern-wheeler, the *Josie Lane* was the same length as the *Sitka*, the first steamer to make it up the Sacramento in 1847. The *Josie* (sometimes called the "Marysville Midget") was only 37 feet long but was actively employed towing barges many times her own length. How and when she met her end on this mud flat in San Francisco is uncertain, but it is doubtful if she ever floated again after suffering the indignity of losing her paddle-wheel.

Our special thanks to Pam Herman of the Meriam Library, Special Collections, California State University, Chico, and to Susan Geary of the Sacramento History Center, Museum and History Division.

The complete text of Edward Zelinsky and Nancy Olmsted's article is available as a booklet from CHS in San Francisco at a cost of \$5.00. Footnotes for this full-length version are included in the listing of footnotes below.



# MINSTREL JAKE WALLACE AND "THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST"

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by Margaret A. Estabrook

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How a traveling minstrel  
became the (unsung) hero  
of a Puccini opera

Opera listeners remember Jake Wallace as the minstrel in Giacomo Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* (*The Girl of the Golden West*). In real life, Jake Wallace was the stage name of Jacob Lynn, Jr., a popular West Coast banjo player and minstrel from the 1850s to the 1880s.<sup>1</sup>

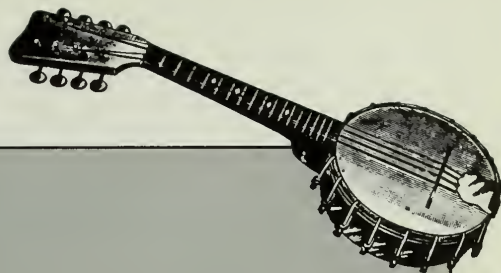
Puccini based *Fanciulla* on David Belasco's play, *The Girl of the Golden West*. As a boy Belasco had appeared on stage with Jake in small mining towns in California and Nevada. "In *Girl of the Golden West*," Belasco wrote,

*I introduced a character in memory of "Jake Wallace" of long ago; I gave him the same name, made him sing the same songs, and enter the poker-saloon to be greeted in the same old hearty manner. When negotiations were under way between the great composer Puccini and myself for the Girl of the Golden West to be set to music, I took him to see a performance of the play. As we sat there, I could feel no perceptible enthusiasm from him until Jake Wallace came in singing his '49-er songs. "Ah!" exclaimed Puccini, "there is my theme at last!"*<sup>2</sup>

Jacob Lynn, Jr., the minstrel who inspired the great Puccini but about whom little is known, was born on November 9, 1836, in New York City to Adline Finch and Jacob Lynn, Sr., an Irish immigrant. In 1852, at the age of sixteen, Jake sailed for San Francisco via Panama to join thousands of others in search of fame and fortune in the Mother Lode.<sup>3</sup>

Adopting the stage name "Jake Wallace," he made his reputation in





1855 as a travelling minstrel in California's mining camps. He reportedly cabined in Forbestown with the famous Jim Beckwourth in 1855 and traveled to Sonora, Columbia, and Dutch Flat, where he played his banjo in gambling houses much like the one recreated in *The Girl of the Golden West*. "Held dear in every western mining camp," wrote Belasco, "he was a banjoist, and when miners heard him coming down the road, singing the old '49 songs, there used to be a general cry of 'Here comes Wallace!' and work would stop for the day."<sup>4</sup>

By 1856 Jake's father and family had joined him in San Francisco where he lived between tours. They built a house at 2475 Sutter Street. His father worked as a brewer at the Lion Co. until he bought the Eagle Brewery in 1860. When unemployed as a musician or actor, Jake joined his father in the brewery. During this period Jake came to know, and shape the career of, fellow performer Lotta Crabtree.<sup>5</sup>

Lotta Crabtree became one of the nation's most famous entertainers of the late nineteenth century, but in the 1850s and '60s she was still in her teens, and like Jake, she played primarily in mining camps. They met in the goldfields, where Jake taught Lotta to play the banjo. Banjo tunes soon became an important and popular part of her repertoire.

"Yes, I taught Lotta the banjo," Jake recalled, "and she was a very apt pupil. She took right hold of the

*The handsome minstrel and banjo player, Jacob Lynn, Jr., sat for San Francisco photographer Jacob Shew in the 1860s.*



**WILLOWS.**  
 HERIDAN CORBYN, MANAGER  
 W. H. SMITH, Director of Amusements

**SUNDAY**  
 Afternoon and Evening, Nov'r 29th, '63.

**GILBERT'S  
 NEW IDEA TROUPE.**

**LOOK**  
 AT OUR

**Star Constellation!**  
 Miss LOTTA,  
 Miss Della Sager,  
 M'lle Azilia,  
 Ada De Vere, Carrie Howard  
 BILLY O'NEIL,  
 J. C. Williams,  
 Johnny DeAngelis,  
 Jake Wallace,

W. D. Corriester,	Pete Sterling,
Geo. H. Edmonds,	H. Groh,
C. Edmonds,	G. Mundweller,
L. Mundweller,	A. Davis,
W. Rogers,	W. H. Smith,

AND THE  
**Excelsior Brass Band.**

true spirit of the instrument and threw her soul into the work of learning it."<sup>6</sup>

In the early 1860s Lotta and Jake appeared together frequently. For example, they played at the Stockton Theatre in February and April 1860 on a bill with the Metropolitan Minstrels, which also included Misses Wilson, Tournour, and Davenport, and Messrs. Wilson, Keene, and LaFont. Jake and Lotta's next professional

Margaret A. (Meg) Estabrook received Master's degrees in American history and library science from Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York.

trip together was in February 1861; this time Jake acted as manager. (Between these two tours, Jake traveled to South America with Joe Murphy's San Francisco Minstrels.) "We left Sacramento on the 24th of February," Jake recalled,

*and worked our way through the mining camps, playing the southern towns. It had been raining several days steadily and the roads were dangerous and in many places almost impassable. At Auburn the mud was so deep that we could hardly get over the road, and we decided after playing there one night to a small house to return to Sacramento and wait for the weather to settle.*<sup>7</sup>

Finishing the story for a newspaper reporter, Jake continued,

*Reaching the American river, we found it running bank high, with the approach to the bridge washed away for some thirty feet. It looked like a last desperate chance. The driver, Ned Whittmore, was all in, so I grabbed the lines from his hands and lashed the horses into the stream. They went in up to their shoulders and it looked as if we were gone, but they got on to the bridge somehow and went over like a house afire. Right in the midst of this I saw a big sign tacked up on the bridge: "Twenty-five dollars fine for driving over this bridge faster than a walk." Well, we made railroad time going over, and the approaches being washed away at the other end, the horses plunged in again, with the women in hysterics—all except little Lotta, who kept her head through it all, shouting encouragement to the horses and yelling every now and then, 'Stay with 'em, Jake! Stay with 'em.*

A short time later the bridge was washed away by the raging river. Jake had saved Lotta's life.<sup>8</sup>

Jake's troupe continued its mem-

orable tour and soon reached Iowa Hill. There, Jake recounted,

*we noticed the town full of miners, and they all seemed excited over something. It was the usual thing to find the miners in the gulches during the day, but here they were at 3 in the afternoon talking excitedly in groups. I asked the landlord if there was a lynching bee on foot, and he told me that the South had seceded and fired on Fort Sumter and taken it. The next thing he asked me was how the company stood. I told him we were all for the Union. He replied, "Good, you will have a packed house tonight." Soon afterwards a man came up to me and calling me by name said he knew me in 1855. He told me that the miners were strong Union-men and simply aching to get a chance to hang a Southern sympathizer.*

The miner told Jake to "cut loose the patriotic airs."<sup>9</sup>

"That was a good tip," Jake recalled,

*and I put in an hour arranging a patriotic song and dance. The place was packed to the doors that night, and many could not get in. When the curtain rose the company was on the stage with the Union colors on and I was in the center waving the American flag. There went up a yell that shook the building. Men and women stood on the benches waving hats and handkerchiefs. I never witnessed such a sight in a theater in my life. It was several minutes before order could be restored and then I began to sing "The Anthem of the Free," and the audience took up the chorus. It was half an hour before things calmed down, and next Lotta came on and sang and danced Tops[e]ly and they showered her with money. It came on the stage like a rain and every time the noise of the falling coin was especially loud the audience drowned it with applause. There was no*





sleep for me that night. I was dragged out of the theater and had to run with the boys. Well we didn't stop running until sun up and then we merely slowed down.<sup>10</sup>

Continuing his first-hand account of the West's response to the Civil War and sharing memories of his tours with Lotta, Jake told a reporter in 1913,

*We went all through the mining camps of California and everywhere it was an ovation. Finally we got into Southern Oregon. Here the atmosphere changed, and finally we reached Roseberg. We played in a small school house, and when the curtain went up we were greeted with a rebel yell, and I knew we were up against it. They never gave a hand to the Union airs we sang, and now and then they hissed us. Lotta had a song and dance that was all patriotic, and I advised her not to give it there as we might be mobbed. She said she would give it if they hanged her that night, and she did with all the vim and gusto she had in her. She faced a cold and relentless audience, and they never gave her a hand, but she went straight through with her song and dance, and I am sure that while men in that crowd dared not applaud her they inwardly admired her grit. I tell you that girl was sand all through.<sup>11</sup>*

Jake, Lotta and company slipped out of town the next morning. On the road to Eugene City Jake's mischievous nature got the upper hand, and he told a rebel sympathizer that "the war was over, that Jeff Davis had been captured and hanged, and threw in a lot more details" which he knew the man would not relish. They left the man standing in the road "hurling horrible epithets at us and waving his gun in the air." According to Lotta's mother, Lotta told

her travelling companion, "Jake Wallace, you'll have us killed if you don't stop guying these people." They reached Portland without incident, however, and returned by steamer to San Francisco.<sup>12</sup>

In the early sixties, Jake and Lotta continued to perform in theaters and dance halls. The next "big break" as performers came with the opening up of Nevada's silver lode which drew miners and speculators to the Washoe as they had gone in '49 with the discovery of gold to California. From July to October 1863, Jake and Lotta appeared at Maguire's Virginia City Melodeon. Reviewers reported that "Jake Wallace provoked considerable mirth in his different acts" and raved about "the comicalities of Wallace and Bray . . . the tuneful music including the quite popular duets of Misses Lotta and Sager . . . and the unrivaled performance of the company generally."<sup>13</sup>

When the troupe returned to San Francisco, Jake and Lotta appeared in November in Gilbert's New Idea Troupe at the Willows. By this time, Lotta was the headliner and Jake's name appeared at the bottom of the playbill. Jake, described by Lotta's biographer as "the tall, genial, lazy comedian, quick of wit, and accomplished with the banjo," had always allowed Lotta to outshine him. The self-effacing minstrel himself knew "she was about the whole show when it came to popularity with the audience." The next year Lotta sailed for New York to embark on her stage career, while Jake remained in San Francisco, except for occasional tours to Hawaii and to the mining towns.<sup>14</sup>

By the 1870s Jake was an established favorite in the variety halls of San Francisco. For years his appear-



CHS, SAN FRANCISCO

*Taught by manager Jake Wallace to play the banjo and sing minstrel songs, the young Lotta Crabtree (shown as "The American Boy" in a Civil War skit) rose to stardom. By 1863 she received top billing over Wallace at the Willows Theater in San Francisco.*

ance would signal the shout from the audience, "Forty-nine! Forty-nine!" Then he would reel off the "Days of Forty-Nine," a long ballad composed by an earlier trouper.

In 1905 David Belasco immortalized the exciting and romantic days of the gold rush and the minstrel who sang its story in *The Girl of the Golden West*. Befitting the play's source of inspiration, sixty-year old Jacob Lynn played himself, the Jake Wallace of earlier days, when the play opened on the West Coast. Five years later, Puccini's opera *La Fanciulla del West* was produced at New York City's Metropolitan Opera. Jake died on November 23, 1917. □

(See notes beginning on page 161.)

# AN HISTORIAN EDGEWOOD



*Constructed in 1854 and enlarged in 1863, this ornate building bounded by Haight, Waller, Buchanan, and Laguna streets served as the San Francisco Orphanage until 1924.*



# REFLECTS ON CHILDREN'S CENTER

by J.S. Holliday

*To provide an opportunity for historians who speak on contemporary subjects to be heard beyond their immediate audiences, California History will from time to time publish speeches and other public comments which are judged to be of interest to our readers.*

*The following speech was given by J.S. Holliday, Executive Director Emeritus of the California Historical Society, on the occasion of a dinner at the Pacific Union Club in San Francisco to celebrate the 134th anniversary of the beginning of the Edgewood Children's Center.*

*Founded in February 1851 as the San Francisco Orphan Asylum Society, this institution has adapted its services to the changing needs of children, from those orphaned in the mid-nineteenth century to those emotionally disturbed, educationally disabled or abused and neglected in the late twentieth century. A privately supported organization which receives some public funding but retains its independent status, Edgewood Children's Center (its name since 1944) has earned a widely respected reputation as a residential and day treatment center for children and their families.*

There is a pride in the room—a pride that comes from a sense of identity with an institution founded by pioneer San Francisco families, sustained by those and allied families through the nineteenth century, and strengthened during the twentieth century by the most prominent of this city's families. Thus, pride of origins and of shared concern for the San Francisco Orphanage Asylum Society, now more felicitously known as the Edgewood Children's Center. I want to think with you about the circumstances in 1851 which called for the creation of this orphanage "by a few ladies of the different congregations of San Francisco"; about how this institution adapted its gentle, ever more professional services to the changing needs of San Francisco's children; about our common concern—our need, even anxiety—to understand why Edgewood's services are even more needed in 1985 than in 1885; and therefore, think with you about what has happened to undermine the cohesive strength of the family and the parent-child relationship.

In 1851 and for several decades thereafter, San Francisco was a rambunctious place, an encampment of thousands of young men—many unmarried, many

with wives back East, all restless transients intent on returning home with a sack full of gold, thereby to build a better life in Baltimore or in Indianapolis, Ann Arbor or Worcester. It was a place of few homes and of many hotels, boarding houses, saloons and gambling halls, and various pleasure palaces. In the everyday consciousness of the American people, San Francisco could scarcely be believed: immorality openly accepted, hundreds of buildings destroyed by fire and rebuilt in a matter of weeks, traditional rules of personal and business conduct tossed aside in the hurly-burly of making money.

In such a place of social anarchy, there were some who sought to build for the future: fortune-seeking husbands who brought their families in those first years of the rush, determining from the outset to make San Francisco their home; others who on leaving their homes back East had promised to return and then found opportunities in San Francisco which justified sending for their wives and children; miners who abandoned their claims for the greater rewards of commerce and prepared for the arrival of their families; ministers who sought to bring order and moral values to this wild and sinful place; and a few



families who were here before the 1849 transformation of California. In 1853 a San Francisco newspaper editorialized: "Every steamer brings wives and families. Such a thing as *HOME* is becoming known in San Francisco!!"

These pioneer families found in the San Francisco Orphan Asylum Society an institution committed to San Francisco's future, to the future those families were betting on. What more practical and symbolic investment in that future could they make than in the care of children and the nurturing of their values? What institution might better reflect the pioneer families' Protestant work ethic than one which proclaimed, as did the orphanage: "We inculcate *the truth* that labor is elevating and idleness is sinful."

And so through the 1850s, '70s and on into the twentieth century, family after family gave their support to the ladies who ran the orphanage. Together they sought to rescue homeless children from what the orphanage's Board of Managers warned would be their plight without the concern and care of volunteer charitable associations: "If we leave children to struggle in the cold world by themselves as best they can, the result will be a childhood of suffering, an early initiation into the worst of vices, a life of sin and misery, and perhaps an ignominious death."

The work of those families and of this institution was more significant in San Francisco than it would have been on previous frontiers because this frontier was unique. On all those other frontiers which had pushed America westward from Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 to Independence, Missouri, in 1849, the family had been the cornerstone of that advance. Husband, wife, children, and possibly parents and relatives together had dared the wilderness. So it had been in

Kentucky and Illinois—and in Oregon. But *not* in California. In San Francisco and other instant cities, certainly in the crude mining camps, there were few women, fewer children. *Home* was a place back East.

The fundamentals of life in California were askew in the 1850s. Some statistics: in 1850, 39,500 men reached the Sacramento Valley via the overland trails, and with them came 2,100 women and 600 children. In 1854, 47,000 people reached San Francisco by ship: 38,500 men and 7,700 women with 2,300 children. Never had there been such a place. The absence of home life, of the constraints and inhibitions created by hometown eyes, allowed what I have called "the freedom of anonymity"—a factor previously unknown in American history. Some goldseekers who wrote of their San Francisco and California experience compared it to a sea voyage, a brief adventure separate from all else in their lives.

One husband wrote home: "The independence and liberality here, the excitement attending the rapid march of this country make me feel insignificant and sad at the prospect of returning to the old beaten path at home." (There's a reassuring message for his wife!) Note the reference to "liberality"—there was more. There was eccentricity and sin. Thus San Francisco's image, its mystique, was established early and continues today. In 1985 more than 40 percent of San Francisco's adult males are single. As in the 1850s, so in the 1980s: San Francisco is seen as a singles' city.

With thousands of young men on the move from mining camp to mining camp, impatient to "strike it rich" and then head for home with "a pocketful of rocks", and with thousands more disappointed in the mines, looking for jobs to earn money for a steamer ticket home, California throughout the 1850s was a





*In an age when children were taught discipline and obedience, these young ladies exercised with "Indian clubs" in a 1912 (pre-aerobics) gymnastic class.*

society of transients. Each year between 25,000 and 30,000 men sailed from San Francisco, bound for the east coast ports via a crossing of the jungled Isthmus of Panama. They totalled 28,600 in 1852—and with them went eight women. That's all—eight. California offered unique opportunities for women—to make a fortune, to find a husband.

As a brief aside, let me tell you about one of those women who left California. She had come with her husband; he died, leaving her alone in a world of men. She held to the old rules of home; she turned from easy money and went to work—baking apple pies. Apples from Oregon, flour from Chile. She sold these pies to the miners at \$8, \$10 and \$12 per pie. Within a few years she was on her way home, taking with her \$18,000. Some baker! I told this story to an audience in Cincinnati some months ago, and when I got to the point of exclaiming over her success—that she was on her way home with a fortune of \$18,000 from selling apple pies—I heard a voice in the back of the hall: "Yeah, that's what she told her mother when she got home."

**T**he founders of Edgewood were concerned about maintaining the old rules of home, the work ethic which they believed would build California. They consciously represented a moral force, an opposition to sin. With the San Francisco Protestant Orphan Asylum Society, other institutions were established to provide the moral infrastructure needed in a place so young, so distracted by temptation: the Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco founded in 1855 with a library and reading rooms for

working class members; in 1850 the Society of California Pioneers to herald the pioneers of 1849 (talk about instant history); and in that same decade, the Ladies Protection and Relief Society. Through these and other institutions, pioneer families sought to create stability and morality. There was about it all a self-conscious sense of making history, like creating traditions. Hubert Howe Bancroft expressed this feeling, writing in the 1870s: "We lack the associations running back for generations—the old homestead, the grandfather and grandmother and uncles and aunts and cousins. There's nothing around us hallowed by an indistinct past. There's nothing older than ourselves, all that we see has grown up under our eyes." As with everything in California, traditions, stability, the establishment itself had to be created in a hurry. Edgewood was part of building a sense of social responsibility and purpose—a caring, motherly institution in the midst of a rough man's world where the rule was: "I'm on board, pull up the ladder." A world where there were few children, and so those who were here to soften society, to remind everyone of home, needed to be protected.

How few children were there? In 1852, 29 percent of the population in the eastern states—"the old thirty"—were under ten years of age. In California only 4½ percent were under ten years. In the old thirty, 23 percent of the population were between the ages of ten and nineteen; in California only 8 percent. Those in their twenties totalled 18 percent in the other states—51 percent in California.

In that chancy world of searching for quick riches where suicides were common, the insane asylum was crowded, and disease took young lives by the hundreds, San Francisco had an abnormal number of



orphans. As well, overland parties newly arrived in the Sacramento Valley and ships in San Francisco Bay brought boys and girls whose parents had died of cholera and in accidents.

In 1855 the state legislature recognized its responsibility to assist in the task of caring for homeless children. Acknowledging that the San Francisco orphanage was the primary caring facility in the state, the legislature granted to the institution \$5,000 that year—assistance greatly welcomed and needed, for that year the orphanage's budget totalled only \$11,000.

**T**hough called an asylum through the hurrying decades of the nineteenth century, the organization was not like other asylums, because in fact it was never designed to operate in a segregated way. It was always involved in community life. There was no wall, no sense of isolation—indeed a major part of the policy in the operation of the orphanage was to reach out to the community, to be involved with the relatives of the children and often with the single parents who were unable to care for

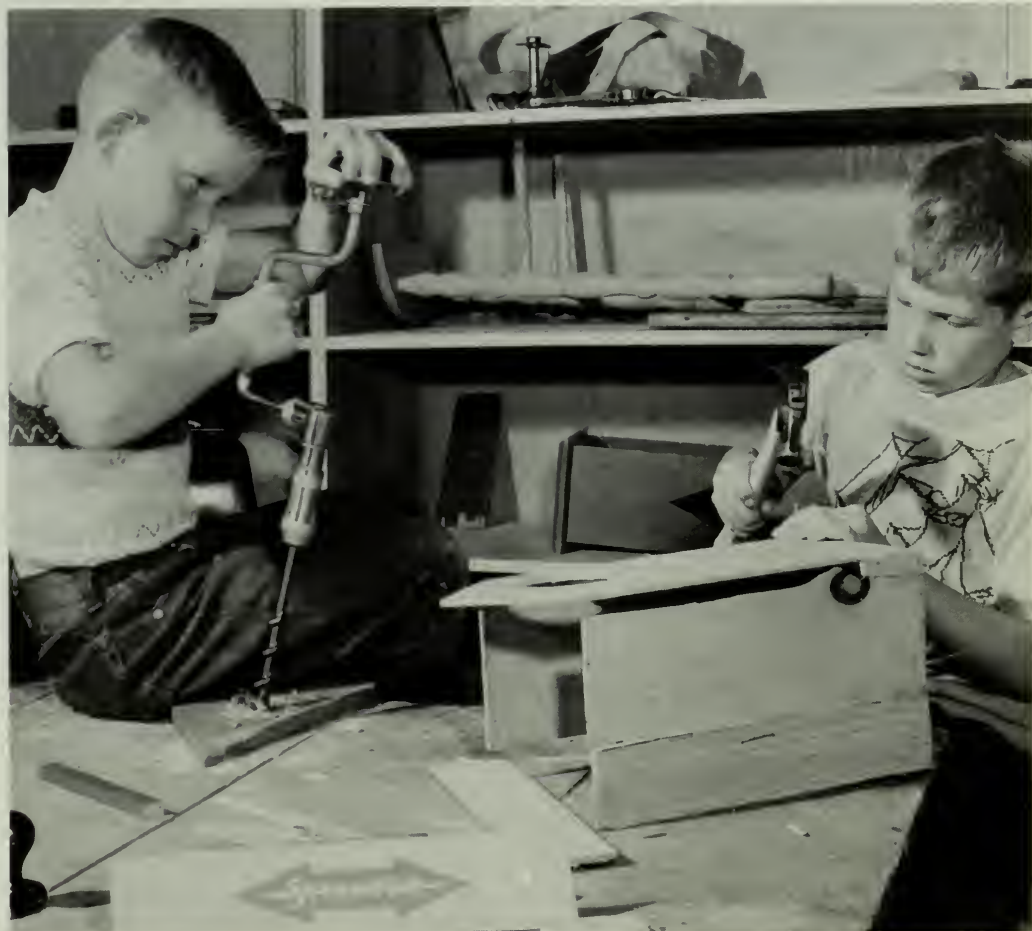
their children and yet remained emotionally attached. The tone and mood and emotional character of the orphanage was well expressed by Mary MacCrellish, who served for forty years as secretary to the Board of Managers. In 1899 she wrote in her annual report about the children and their relationship to the community: "Happy, healthy children are always noisy and the shouts of mirth reach us often a block away, and it gives us pleasure to mention the fact that many of our neighbors have made the comment that the orphan children cheered them frequently with their joyous shouts and took them back to their own childhood joys. Ah, memory lives within all of us and it is our aim that each child *we* shelter and protect may look back to the days they spent with the asylum as the happiest of their lives, for it was a home to them when they had no other."

As the orphanage was tied to the community of San Francisco, so it reflected the mix of peoples who lived there—what we would call today the ethnicity of San Francisco. In 1881 the annual report revealed that of the 224 children living there, 99 were of American parentage, 37 German, 19 English, 14 Irish, 9 Scots, 7 Welsh, 3 French, 2 Norwegian, 2 Swiss, 1 Swedish, 1 Italian and 22 with both parents foreign



*Their eagerness heightened by the presence of a photographer, these boys (facing page) are learning some of the skills taught in a pre-World War I manual training class.*

*Birdhouse building at Edgewood, c. 1940, would seem to have threatened thumbs, arms, and legs and produced drafty homes for birds.*



but of different nationalities.

The children became further involved with the San Francisco community in 1896. What happened was reported by the Board of Managers in its annual publication. It is of interest not only as a part of the orphanage's history but as well as a forecast of the twentieth century. "As a result of a *well-organized strike against the teacher of the older boys and girls*, the Board decided to place 58 of our boys and girls in the public schools."

In 1899 the annual report advised that "attendance at the public schools gives the children the animation of fresh companionship while they become familiar with matters that brighten their lives and develop their thinking powers. Particularly this was the case during the war, when our boys were fired with patriotism. They sought information, they knew the cause of the conflict and the names of the generals and all the naval heroes." This war was, of course, our involvement with Spain and the engagements in Cuba and the Philippines.

1920 marked the beginning of a trend toward more professional management of the institution. Up to that year the children had been under the supervision of a matron. One of those ladies, Mrs. McNear,

served in that leadership role for nineteen years. In 1920 the Board of Managers changed the title to 'superintendent' and hired Cecil Mark, who was followed in that task in 1929 by W.L. Kuser, who served until 1945. These men faced an ever increasing challenge to reshape the role and responsibilities of the orphanage. The number of orphans was declining precipitously, yet the need for institutional care remained undiminished. Statistics reflect the changing circumstances of family life, with resulting problems for children. In 1929, sixty boys and girls were admitted to the San Francisco orphanage for the following causes: death of one or both parents, 28 percent; desertion by parents, 25 percent; broken homes, 23 percent; mental disease, 12 percent; and other factors, such as "unfit homes" and illness of parents.

Obviously, "orphanage" was a misnomer (though the name Edgewood Children's Center did not come into use until 1944). The institution was no longer caring for orphans but rather for *dependent children*. As the social service department of the orphanage explained: "We recognize that children come to us as members of a family group—that their relationships with their families are very potent factors in their lives and when they leave us they go back to the



Roasting hot-dogs makes for laughter and teasing and happy memories.

Each summer from 1911 until 1952 Edgewood faculty and children (facing page) spent ten weeks in the Contra Costa County countryside near Danville. Campfires, swimming, hikes, and a general sense of freedom and adventure made Camp Swain an unforgettable part of the Edgewood experience. The girls in this photograph are gathered at the entrance to the camp's rambling headquarters building.

families. Therefore it is our responsibility to strengthen the tie between parent and child and to make the parental relationship a positive force for good in the child's life."

Thus the institution by the 1930s was ever more a part of the community, working within the social forces that were changing San Francisco. Edgewood began to receive an increasing percentage of its annual budget from state and municipal sources. But unlike other agencies, this institution preserved its financial, intellectual and emotional ties to its traditional private support. Then and now this enrichment by the board and by corporations—by private sources—makes possible what Edgewood's Executive Director Morris Kilgore calls "the margin of excellence"—meaning many special programs providing educational and emotional care for children and always involving their families.

In 1945 the final step in the evolution of management at Edgewood developed with the hiring of a fully professional manager, Melvin Philbrick, who took the agency from "child caring to child treating." Since his tenure, the institution has been thoroughly professionalized, so that the staff has been able to create a series of special treatment and educational programs responsive to the changing circumstances and dangers which affect San Francisco's children.

While the percentage of orphans admitted to Edgewood continued to decline from 28 percent in 1929, the number of emotionally and otherwise handicapped children increased as a consequence of the

prevalence of divorce and illegitimacy. With these causes of instability, other disruptive influences dramatically changed family life between the 1930s–1950s and the 1960s–1980s. The contrast between those eras has been called the "generation gap," but it is clearly not a matter of age but of values and expectations—a sense of what was expected of us as young people as compared to the youth of today. That contrast is poignantly recalled in *New York Times* columnist Russell Baker's autobiography *Growing Up* which recounts his boyhood in the 1930s and '40s. Through the pages of this gentle memoir we hear again and again maxims once familiar, now forgotten: "Early to bed, early to rise. . . . The early bird gets the worm. . . . Satan finds work for idle hands to do. . . . Spare the rod, spoil the child. . . . A man has to get in the habit of saving for a rainy day. . . ." What happened to those admonitions which affirmed the Protestant work ethic?

Some of the answers are to be found in another impressive book, David Potter's study of American society and values: *People of Plenty*. What follows is a paraphrase of his ideas. Potter points out that "in the rearing of a child, it would be difficult to imagine any factors more vital than the distinction between a permissive and an authoritarian regime or more vital than the age at which economic responsibility is imposed. In both these matters the modern American child lives under a very different dispensation from children in the past." This difference developed after World War II when the American economy changed from one of scarcity to one of abundance. From the nineteenth century through the depression years of the 1930s the worker "accepted the principle of authority; he accepted his own subordination and the





obligation to cultivate the qualities appropriate to his subordination, such as submissiveness, obedience and deference."

The authority that the worker/father found in the work world, in the economy of scarcity, he transferred to his relationship with his wife and his children, with himself as the center of authority. He demanded obedience and deference. Then after World War II, in an economy of abundance, the worker was no longer the supplicant; obedience was no longer necessary and was therefore less a virtue. "The principle of authority lost some of its majesty," according to Potter, and the father no longer regarded authority as the primary criterion of domestic order. He ceased to impose authority on his children because he had found in the economy of abundance that the most valuable trait in himself was the capacity "for independent decision and self reliance to conduct his own affairs in dealing with the diverse opportunities which abundance offered him." He encouraged this quality of independence in his children. Thus, our society shifted from authoritarian to permissive training. Though this dramatic change in child rearing involved sacrifice in obedience and discipline, "permissiveness became the characteristic mode of child rearing in the one country which most distinctively enjoys an economy of abundance."

If abundance fostered permissiveness in child rearing, "it no less certainly altered the entire process of imposing economic responsibility upon the child and hence on the process of preparing the child for such responsibility." Again the change resulted from the shift from an economy of scarcity to one of abundance. A scarcity economy could not afford to support non-productive members; hence, children went

to work when they were young. They attended primary school for much less time than today, only a minority attended high school and only a few college. Even during brief years in school, children worked in the home, on the farm, or even in the factory. But beginning after World War II the economy of abundance made it possible for families to support non-productive members. And it came that we assigned this role—sometimes against their will—to the younger and the elder members of the family. Thus, years of schooling were lengthened, thereby deferring economic responsibility for an unusually long time. We even enforced laws setting minimum ages for leaving school, for going to work, for consenting to sexual intercourse, for marrying.

Such exemption from economic responsibility might seem to imply for the child a long, blissful youth, free from strains. But delays in reaching economic maturity/responsibility were not matched by comparable delays in other phases of growing up. On the contrary, children physically arrive at puberty a year or more younger than their counterparts a generation ago. And, culturally, they are made aware of the allurements of sex at an earlier age because of movies, television, magazines, and dating in their early teens. Peer group standards and parental generosity encourage young people to demand expensive and mature recreations similar to those of adults. "Thus there is an imbalance between the postponement of responsibility and the quickening of social maturity which have contributed to make American adolescence a more difficult age than human biology alone would cause it to be." Thus the American economy of abundance is a major factor in the formation of character, hastening social maturity



while prolonging economic immaturity. For parents the consequences have been ever more complex and painful as, decade by decade, American life has become for parents and for children a complexity—a torment—of choices.

These observations and Edgewood's 134-year record of coping with the changing needs of children suggest that childhood has a history. Historians and sociologists are increasingly active in studying that history, from French social historian Philippe Aries, whose book *Centuries of Childhood* (1962) contended that before the seventeenth century there was no concept of childhood and children were not protected from adult society, to Professor Joseph Illick at San Francisco State University, whose course, "Childhood: Past and Present," considers the ever-changing parent-child relationship, from infanticide and abandonment in the past to caring and nurturing in the present.

In reviewing that evolution Professor Illick has observed that child-rearing advice has always been variegated and often contradictory, culminating in

the twentieth century with studies of child development and advances in pediatrics and psychological sophistication which make parents doubt themselves and either monitor their natural responses—or explode in frustration. Such explosions in times past were part of the authoritarian "don't spare the rod" tradition of child-rearing. Illick cites a letter by Henry IV of France written in 1604 regarding treatment of his son Louis XIII: "I have a complaint to make: you do not send word that you have whipped my son. I wish and command you to whip him every time he is obstinate or misbehaves, knowing full well myself that there is nothing in the world which will be better for him than that. I know it from experience, having myself profited, for when I was his age I was often whipped. That is why I want you to whip him and to make him understand why."

While severe corporal punishment was accepted (recommended!) in the seventeenth and later centuries, we are today increasingly sensitive to and often appalled by child abuse in the 1980s. With "abuse" becoming tragically more exploitive (including prostitution and pornography), the need for Edgewood's rescue and rehabilitation programs is greater than ever.



These Edgewood girls (facing page) surely would have won the heart even of pedaphobe W.C. Fields who, in any case, would have admired their comic antics.

At summer camp boys could test their skills as William Tell or slide down grassy slopes or just day-dream in the sun's warmth.



To help all of us, professionals at Edgewood and parents at home, to understand the problems of modern children, there are several books which analyze the forces changing childhood and eroding the stability of family life. One by Neil Postman (a professor of "media ecology"), entitled *The Disappearance of Childhood* (1983), explores the debilitating effect of television (the "one-eyed monster"), which presents adults and children the same messages and thereby blurs or destroys the dividing line between their worlds. Marie Winn, in her book, *Children without Childhood* (1984), argues that "with the rise in two-career families and with the mounting divorce rate . . . , parents have had cause to withdraw their close, protective attention to children. With the fascinating presence of television (the plug-in drug) mesmerizing and sedating normally unpredictable and demanding children . . . adult attention and supervision [have decreased]." Another, better known critic of American life, Vance Packard has turned his attention to *Our Endangered Children* (1984).

Amidst these voices of concern, the one which will sound loudest in your ears and mean most to your minds is that of Edgewood's Executive Director, Morris Kilgore, who wrote in the Fall 1984 issue of

*Edgewood Today*: "Many parents are simply overwhelmed by the pressures of failed relationships, divorce, single parenthood, economic and occupational struggles. The traditional support systems of family, neighborhood, church and friendship are either not available or not used, leaving families vulnerable to their own internal explosions. Whatever the reasons, some adults do such violence to the youngsters in their care that the courts must remove them from contact to ensure the safety of the children. . . . While it is not possible to remove life's insults, it is possible to reduce family vulnerability to those insults. Edgewood's purpose is to restore family balance by providing hope where there is hopelessness, confidence where there is uncertainty and capacity to cope where there is helplessness."

This call for caring, this voice of purpose and of gentleness, takes us back to the original San Francisco Orphan Asylum creed—and reminds us of the enduring value of this voluntary charitable institution in our less-than-caring and increasingly unstable post-modern world. □

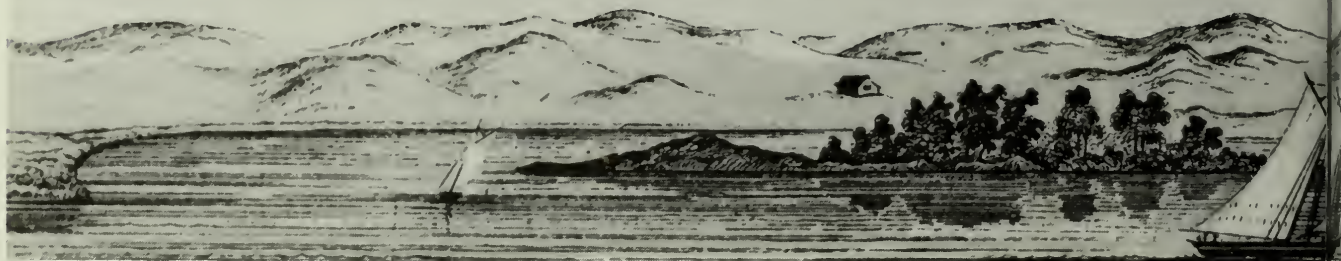
*The photographs appearing in this article are from the archives of the Edgewood Children's Center, San Francisco.*

by Brian McGinty

In its early days,  
San Francisco had some lively rivals

# COULD ONE OF THESE

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When John Steinbeck was growing up in Salinas in the early years of this century, he and his neighbors called San Francisco "The City." "Of course," the Nobel Prize-winning novelist remembered in *Travels With Charley*, "it was the only city we knew, but I still think of it as the City, and so does everyone else who has ever associated with it."<sup>1</sup>

The Forty-Niners called San Francisco "The City," as did the builders of the great transcontinental railroad and the sea captains who, in the closing days of the Age of Sail, piloted sleek clipper ships and windjammers in and out of the Golden Gate. Today, it is difficult for westerners to conceive of a time when San Francisco was not the great metropolis of Northern California. A little more than a century ago, however, "The City" was no more than a scruffy waterfront village, and a half-dozen other California towns laid equal claims to the honor of being the West's first metropolis.

Sutterville, Francisca, New York of the Pacific—the names of these villages are all but forgotten today, but in the middle of the nineteenth

century their promoters entertained fond hopes that they would one day become great cities. Vallejo, Benicia, and Alviso still survive, though they are pale shadows of the commercial and industrial centers their Gold Rush founders envisioned.

If these places seem obscure to twentieth-century Californians, the village of Yerba Buena cannot have inspired greater hope in its residents in the early 1840s. Founded in 1835, when Mexican Governor José Figueroa ordered the establishment of a pueblo midway between Mission Dolores and the Presidio of San Francisco, Yerba Buena was still a one-horse village when the Stars and Stripes were raised over its plaza in July of 1846—and little more in January of 1847, when Alcalde Washington Bartlett, in a burst of unofficial inspiration (the alcalde did not consult the town council), changed the pueblo's name from Yerba Buena to San Francisco. The village had scarcely 500 inhabitants in July 1847; at the end of 1849, its population numbered about 8,000; and even as late as 1852, a state census showed the population of San Francisco to be only 34,776—less

than the present population of Redwood City, San Rafael, or Hayward, and about the same as that of the East Bay city of Antioch.<sup>2</sup>

In the race to become a great city, Yerba Buena clearly had advantages. It faced on the bay and was readily accessible to the great sea lanes which, before the completion of the transcontinental railroad, were the commercial lifelines of the Pacific Coast. Nestled snugly at the northeast corner of the San Francisco peninsula, the village was sheltered from the wind and fog that alternately buffeted and shrouded the long coast of Northern California.

Yerba Buena's disadvantages, however, were as notable as its advantages. The northern peninsula was barren and poorly suited to agriculture, and, if a city were to rise there, it would clearly have to look elsewhere for its food and timber. The village was separated by the bay itself from the continental mainland, and, when the Iron Horse came over the mountains to California (as everybody knew one day it would), it would certainly not make San Francisco its terminus. The railroad



# HAVE BEEN "THE CITY"?



would surely select a more convenient site for its western anchorage—in Contra Costa County, perhaps, or on the northern bank of Carquinez Strait, or somewhere in the great Central Valley. These places adjoined fertile farmlands that would assure them rich and plentiful supplies of food and wood. Despite the comparative shelter of Yerba Buena Cove, the other sites all had better climates than San Francisco, and they were fully as accessible to the sea lanes of the Pacific. The tallest sailing ships of the day could easily navigate San Pablo Bay, Carquinez Strait and Suisun Bay, while many could continue up the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers into the heart of the Central Valley itself.

History has recorded the cruel twists of fate by which John Sutter, on whose great Sacramento Valley domain gold was discovered in 1848, was reduced from the status of a semi-feudal baron to that of a broken and disillusioned pauper. The tailrace of Sutter's sawmill at Coloma had not

yet revealed its treasure of yellow metal when, toward the end of 1845, the Swiss entrepreneur made plans to found a great city on the banks of the Sacramento River, a few miles from his adobe fort. He selected a site about two miles south of the confluence of the Sacramento and American rivers, where steep banks rose up from the bed of the Sacramento to meet a gently rolling plain. Commissioning two Americans, John Bidwell and Lansford W. Hastings, to lay out streets and squares and parks, Sutter christened his projected metropolis "Suttersville." Within a few months, it would become more generally known as "Suterville."<sup>3</sup>

Protected by its high banks from the floods that periodically inundated much of the surrounding country, Suterville was conveniently located astride the principal trade route between Sutter's Fort and the Golden Gate. Houses were put up in the town, a dock of sorts built alongside the river, and a twenty-ton sloop commissioned to carry freight and passengers between the town and San Francisco Bay. "Our new town," Captain Sutter exulted

*"Montezuma House," site of Lansford Hastings's projected city of Montezuma, appears on this 1851 engraving of the Sacramento River mouth. C. Ringgold, Series of Charts with Sailing Directions*

on May 12, 1848, ". . . will soon be next in size to San Francisco among California towns."<sup>4</sup>

But the entrepreneur reckoned without the interference of his son, John Sutter, Jr. While Sutter, Sr., was at Coloma in the winter of 1848-49, Sutter, Jr., armed with a power of attorney from his father, proceeded to the flood plain west of Sutter's Fort to lay out a new town called Sacramento City. When his father learned of his son's "mischievous," he promptly revoked his authority. If he could have, he would have revoked Sacramento as well. "Had I not been snowed in at Coloma," the old man insisted years later, "Sacramento never, never would have been built."<sup>5</sup>

But built it was. In 1849, a handsome *Plan von Suttersville*, published in Germany, showed the broad streets of the projected city rising from the banks of the Sacramento Fluss (river), with sites for a Markt

“Had I not been snowed in at Coloma,”  
insisted [Sutter], “Sacramento never,  
never would have been built.”

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*Platz* (market place), an *Oeffentlicher Platz* (open plaza) and a *Stadthaus* (courthouse), and two grand *Kirchen* (churches).<sup>6</sup> By the time the plan made its way back to California, however, Sutterville had fallen hopelessly behind Sacramento in the race to become a city, and John Sutter had experienced one of the first and sharpest disappointments of his life.

Lansford Hastings, who helped Sutter lay the foundations of Sutterville, had municipal ideas of his own. Hastings had often traveled between Sutter's Fort and Yerba Buena by ship, and, as he did, he studied the long, low shore that lay between Carquinez Strait and the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. The water route between these two points was a natural highway, and Hastings was sure that the great city of California's future would be located somewhere along its banks. In 1846, he chose a site near the eastern end of Suisun Bay in what would later become Solano County and announced to the world that he would build the “great metropolis” of California on it. Recalling the splendors of the Aztec emperor of Mexico, he called his city, “Montezuma.”<sup>7</sup>

Hastings was a man of intelligence and ambition, and, if his plans for Montezuma seemed grandiose, few in California were willing to dismiss them out of hand. He had practiced law in his native Ohio before heading west in 1842 as captain of a train of covered wagons, then returned to Ohio in 1844 with the manuscript

of a western guidebook in hand. Published in Cincinnati in 1845, Hastings's *Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California* lured thousands of westering pioneers (among them the ill-fated Donners) across the plains into California. Though not himself a Mormon, Hastings was widely believed to be acting as an agent for the Mormons when he returned to California in 1845, helped Sutter lay out Sutterville, and then pushed on to his own settlement in Solano County. A large colony of Latter-Day Saints was headed for California, so the rumors went, and Montezuma would be their capital city.<sup>8</sup>

Hastings built an adobe house on a bluff above the site of his projected city and established a ferry across the San Joaquin River. But the Mormons did not come to California. Sleek ships, moving between Sacramento and Yerba Buena, glided past Montezuma, oblivious to its lures. When the noted writer Bayard Taylor passed the site in 1849, he observed “the city of Montezuma, a solitary house on a sort of headland projecting into Suisun Bay. . . .” Soon the founder himself abandoned the site for San Francisco, where he opened a law office and set about the mundane business of making a living for himself and his family.<sup>9</sup>

Jonathan D. Stevenson's plan to build a great city in Contra Costa County, almost exactly opposite the site of Montezuma, was more practical than Hastings's scheme but not a bit less ambitious. Stevenson had come to California in 1847 as colonel of a regiment of citizen-soldiers whose purpose was, first, to help regular army and navy units wrest California from Mexico, and, sec-

ond, to settle the country. The fighting was over when Stevenson's Regiment of New York Volunteers arrived in San Francisco in 1847, but the job of settling California had only begun. The colonel himself spent some time in the Mother Lode, then, in January 1849, formed a partnership with a surgeon named W.C. Parker. The partners purchased the 10,000-acre Rancho Los Medanos on the north slope of Mount Diablo and set about the business of transforming it into a city. They hired a young army lieutenant named William T. Sherman (later famed for marching through Georgia) to survey and plot the site. Recalling Stevenson's home in the East, they named the new metropolis, “New York of the Pacific.”<sup>10</sup>

On May 17, 1849, Stevenson announced the establishment of his “city” with a notice in the *Alta California* (published in San Francisco). He pointed out that New York of the Pacific was situated at the mouths of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and adjacent to a deep-water harbor. The site, an oak-studded plain that ran up from the edge of Suisun Bay to the base of Mount Diablo, offered ample room for expansion. “[T]here is not in all California,” Stevenson continued proudly, “a point combining so many advantages for business purposes, with a fine healthy climate, dry soil, . . . a superior harbor for vessels of the largest class, and an abundant supply of pure water at all seasons.” The promoter hired a writer and actor named Stephen Massett to act as clerk, land agent, and general factotum of New York of the Pacific, then sent a party of settlers to the site to put up some

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houses. Convinced that his city was destined to greatness, Stevenson petitioned the legislature to make it the state capital. But the legislature was interested in other towns. Soon the sale of lots in New York slowed to a trickle. Building stopped, and grass grew high in the paper streets of the town. Concealing their chagrin, Stevenson and Parker returned to San Francisco, where they bought land, put up buildings, and, for all the world knew or cared, forgot about their "metropolis" in Contra Costa County.<sup>11</sup>

The village of Alviso in Santa Clara County seems an unlikely site for a city today. In the 1840s and '50s, however, its founders entertained fond hopes that a city would rise at Alviso, and, in the 1890s, the town enjoyed a renaissance of sorts as the projected site of a huge shipping and manufacturing center. The heavy rains that pounded Northern California in the winter of 1982-83 vividly demonstrated Alviso's vulnerability to flooding and the need for stout levees to protect the town from the periodic overflowing of the Guadalupe River.<sup>12</sup> There were no such levees in the earliest days of Alviso, but the fact did not deter prominent Californians (among them the

state's first governor) from touting the place as the site of a great city.

The Spaniard Ygnacio Alviso was the first settler of the townsite. Alviso received a grant for the 1,800-acre Rancho Rincón de los Esteros in 1838, and two years later he and his family came to live on the property. Nearby was the old Embarcadero de Santa Clara, or landing place of Santa Clara Mission, which for decades had served as one of the principal shipping points for South Bay freight and passengers. The discovery of quicksilver in the Coast Range mountains south of San José and of gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada increased the flow of trade through the landing place, necessitating the construction of a warehouse and the establishment of regular steamer service to San Francisco.<sup>13</sup>

It was in 1849 that the town of Alviso was founded. Its promoters were a group of American businessmen, among whom Peter H. Burnett was easily the best known. Born in Tennessee and admitted to the practice of law in Missouri, Burnett had come to California in 1848 and less than a year later won election as its first state governor. He was a canny businessman with a sure instinct for values and a knack for making profitable deals. The pueblo of San José, only nine miles distant from Alviso, was then the capital of

*Sidewheelers and sailing ships fill the busy harbor of Benicia and the Carquinez straits in this fanciful 1851 engraving. C. Ringgold, Series of Charts with Sailing Directions*

California and, as such, the seat of Burnett's political activities. Alviso, where the governor built a home and invested in land, became the center of his equally active business life.<sup>14</sup>

Streets were laid out in Alviso and lots surveyed and marked off. Houses and stores were put up and a spindly wharf built into Alviso Slough. Journalist E. Gould Buffum visited the new "city" and praised it warmly. "The want of a great commercial town at the head of the great bay of San Francisco," Buffum wrote confidently, "has been supplied by the location of Alviso. . . . Alviso must inevitably grow into importance."<sup>15</sup>

As Burnett and his partners talked about building a canal from Alviso to San José, the price of lots in the town surged upward. But the legislature threw water on the investors' ardor when, in June 1851, it announced its intention of moving the capital from San José to the new city of Vallejo, at the northern end of the bay. The legislature's decision brought the sale of lots in Alviso to a quick halt. Ever-nimble, Governor Burnett withdrew his money from Alviso to the greener investment

## Sleeping at night aboard ships anchored in the harbor, trudging by day along weed-clogged streets, the legislators quickly concluded that another move was in order.

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pastures of San José and, then, to San Francisco. Almost overnight, a torpor settled over the little village by the bay.

It was not until forty years later that Alviso bloomed a second time. In 1890, a group of real estate investors led by the owner of a San Diego watch factory bought a large tract of land in and around Alviso and announced its intention of turning it into a shipping and manufacturing center called New Chicago. The site shared some similarities with its great Midwestern namesake. Like the "Windy City," New Chicago hugged the southern end of a great inland sea, and it had a vast agricultural plain at its back door. Stressing the similarities of the Illinois and California sites, the promoters of New Chicago laid out streets with names that recalled those of its prototype: State, Wabash, Michigan, Grand. Advertising in San Francisco newspapers, the promoters announced that a broad-gauge railroad would be built from San José to New Chicago and that Alviso Slough would be straightened and deepened. Promising steel and iron works, textile factories and a sugar refinery, they painted a rosy future for the town. "The cathedral bell of the city clock," they wrote, "will chime the hour when the great armies of workmen shall file in twos and threes into the great factories, yet unbuilt."<sup>16</sup>

But New Chicago, like Alviso before it, was doomed to failure. Perhaps it was the threat of floods that hung constantly over the town. Perhaps it was the suspicion that the promoters' promises were too extravagant ever to be fulfilled. By the end of the summer of 1890, more than 3,500 lots and 17,000 shares in

a company formed to dredge Alviso Slough had been bought and paid for, and, by October 1891, the San José Watch Company had opened a factory in New Chicago. But the slough was not dredged, the railroad was not built, and the factories and refinery were not opened. After a single day of operation, the watch factory closed its doors. A welter of lawsuits discouraged capitalists from investing in New Chicago, and Alviso settled back into obscurity, with only a string of grandly named streets to remind it of its flirtation with greatness.<sup>17</sup>

Vallejo, the town that succeeded San José as the capital of California, was a late starter in the race to become a city. Vallejo had its beginnings in the spring of 1850, when General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Spanish grandee of the region north of San Francisco Bay, proposed to build a city on a part of his vast Soscó Rancho in Solano County. Vallejo chose a hilly site overlooking Carquinez Strait, where the Napa River meets San Pablo Bay, and suggested that the city be named Eureka. His friends in the legislature, however, insisted that it be called Vallejo. In a grand gesture, the general offered to give the state 146 acres of land at Vallejo and to provide funds for building and furnishing a capitol, a governor's mansion, a university, common schools, hospitals, asylums, a botanical garden, and a state penitentiary.<sup>18</sup>

The lawmakers were eager to accept Vallejo's offer, but when they met in his new "city" on January 5, 1852, they were not sure they had

made the right decision. There was a capitol of sorts, but it was unimposing and poorly furnished. There were no hotels, food was "amusingly scarce," and the only barber shop was "an extemporaneous affair conducted by an Ethiopian." Sleeping at night aboard ships anchored in the harbor, trudging by day along weed-clogged streets, the legislators quickly concluded that another move was in order. Citizens of Sacramento had offered the Sacramento County courthouse for legislative use, and, on January 12, 1852, the lawmakers accepted Sacramento's offer. While Vallejo remained the "permanent capital" of the state, the "temporary seat of government" shifted to the Central Valley town.<sup>19</sup>

The legislature was back in Vallejo in January 1853, but the weather was cold and the hotels and restaurants little better than they had been the year before. And the legislature was as dissatisfied as ever. Strapped for cash, General Vallejo offered to give the state half of the 20,000 lots he owned in Vallejo in lieu of his promise to pay for all the state buildings. The legislature demurred. Vallejo then asked to be released from all of his obligations to the state. The lawmakers granted this petition, on condition that the general himself release the state from any claims he might assert by reason of the legislature's departure from Vallejo. The deal struck, the legislature was off again, this time for Benicia.<sup>20</sup>

The loss of the state capital was a blow to Vallejo, but the blow was not fatal. The city still had promise. It was conveniently located astride important waterways, and the lush farms and forests of Napa and Solano counties lay behind it. Many people believed that when the trans-





continental railroad was finished—the “Last Spike” was not driven until 1869—Vallejo would become its western terminus and thus California’s principal rail center.

After 1854, when the federal government established an important naval station on Mare Island, across the Napa River from Vallejo, the North Bay city became a bustling maritime center. A stone dock was built at the cost of more than a million dollars. Wharves crowded the banks of the river, and stores and houses dotted Vallejo’s hills. Led by a group of local investors, the California Pacific Railroad began in 1867 to lay tracks from Vallejo eastward to Sacramento and Marysville. Linked to San Francisco by ferryboats, Vallejo was as close in time to the city by the Golden Gate as Redwood City on the San Francisco

Peninsula or San Leandro in the East Bay. After the California Pacific added the Petaluma Valley Railroad and the California Steam Navigation Company to its holdings, its directors announced an ambitious plan to extend its rails from Davis north to Christmas Lake in Oregon and thence eastward to Salt Lake City. “Vallejo will be an important railway center, as well as a considerable shipping port,” concluded the *San Francisco Bulletin*. “[T]he prospects of Vallejo,” agreed the *Vallejo Chronicle*, “are very brilliant.”<sup>21</sup>

But the behemoth known as the Central Pacific Railroad had not yet been heard on the question. Would the great transcontinental railroad permit its traffic to flow westward through Vallejo—or would it attempt to divert that traffic elsewhere? Lieutenant Colonel B.S.

*The real Benicia of the 1850s and 1860s boasted little cosmopolitan sophistication associated with a potential capital city, much less sidewalks.*

Alexander of the U.S. Army Engineers believed firmly that the California Pacific and the Central Pacific should join forces at Vallejo, “for the interests of both these roads,” Alexander said, “point in this direction. . . . Vallejo would be at once converted into the great railway centre of the State; the proposed great harbor at Oakland would probably never be excavated, and Vallejo from that time forward would contend with San Francisco alone for commercial supremacy.”<sup>22</sup>

It was a heady, even a noble, dream—but a dream that was not destined to come true. Collis P. Huntington, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker and Mark Hopkins—the

## Benicia was conceived as a great city, not as a village that might one day aspire to grandeur.

"Big Four" of the Central Pacific—were always more eager to compete than to cooperate. Sensing that the California Pacific had overtaxed its financial resources, the moguls bought up large blocks of the railroad's stock, then proceeded to negotiate a series of agreements that gave them virtual control of the line. Moving the California Pacific's offices from Vallejo to Sacramento (headquarters of the Central Pacific), they all but shut down the rival road. Traffic that had previously crossed the Rockies and the Sierra to Vallejo was now shunted south through Stockton, Livermore, Pleasanton, and Oakland on Central Pacific tracks. From Oakland, freight and passengers crossed the bay to San Francisco on Central Pacific ferries. When a section of California Pacific track was washed away in a flood, the "Big Four" declined to replace it.<sup>23</sup>

The results were predictable: Vallejo's once-crowded harbor grew quiet, as businesses closed their doors and workmen embarked on long periods of unemployment. While the Central Pacific tightened its grip on the far-flung transportation routes of the Golden State, residents of Vallejo settled back to dream of the greatness that almost was theirs.

When the state capital moved from Vallejo to Benicia in 1853, General Vallejo's feelings must have been mixed. Vallejo bore his name, but Benicia bore that of his wife. Both towns were, after a fashion, Vallejo family affairs. The general himself had conceived Vallejo; with part-

ners, he had laid the foundations of Benicia, insisting that it be named for Mrs. Vallejo. "One is myself," he said years later, "the other is my wife."<sup>24</sup>

The original idea for Benicia came from a lanky Kentuckian named Robert Semple. Semple had been one of the party of "Bear Flaggers" who, in June of 1846, surrounded General Vallejo's home at Sonoma and proclaimed California a republic. Helping to escort Vallejo to Sutter's Fort as a prisoner, Semple had crossed the lush hillsides and valleys of the general's Soscol Rancho. Looking down from a hilltop on the smooth waters of Carquinez Strait, the Kentuckian grew excited. Here, he reckoned, was the ideal site for California's great city—a city he himself would give anything to launch.

General Vallejo was not a man to hold grudges. After his release from Sutter's Fort, he listened attentively to Semple's plans. The Kentuckian was a man of energy, vision, and obvious persuasiveness. If he wanted to build a city on the Soscol, Vallejo would give him the land to build it on. He insisted on only one thing: The city must be named for Mrs. Vallejo. And so, on December 22, 1846, Vallejo conveyed to Semple a one-half interest in a large tract of land at the eastern end of Carquinez, where the channel widens into Suisun Bay, and Semple announced to the world the founding of the City of Francisca, so named to honor Doña Francisca Benicia Carrillo de Vallejo, mistress of the Vallejo domains.<sup>25</sup>

But the name "Francisca" was destined to be short-lived. When Semple appeared at the alcalde's office in Yerba Buena in January 1847 to re-

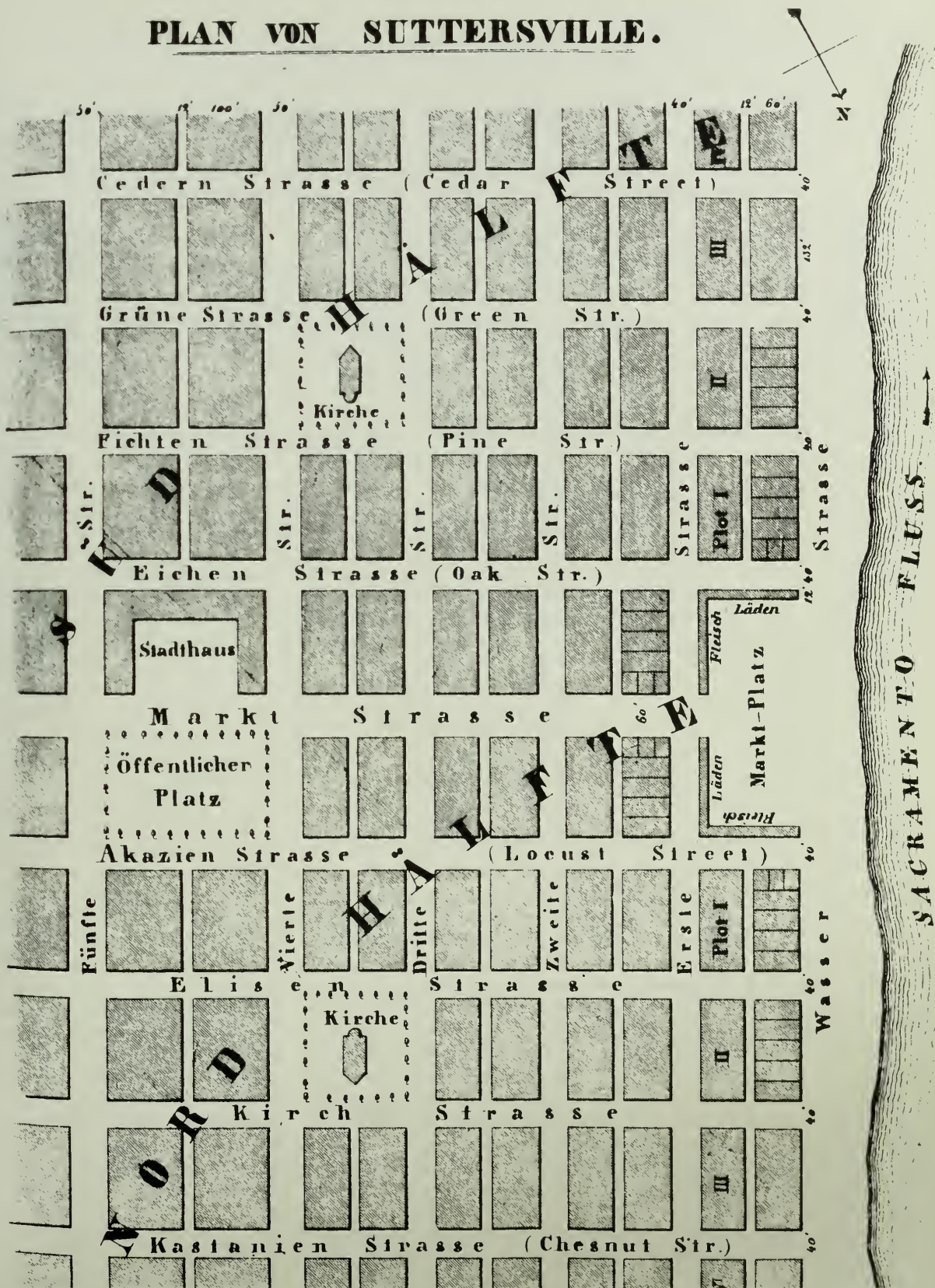
cord his deeds for Francisca (the alcalde then performed the duties of a public recorder as well as a mayor and judge), Alcalde Washington Bartlett raised his eyebrows. "Francisca" was remarkably similar to "San Francisco," already world famous as the name of a mission and bay, while "Yerba Buena" was hardly known beyond Northern California. When immigrants came to California, would the oddly named Yerba Buena be their destination—or an upstart "city" called "Francisca"? On January 30, 1847, the *California Star* (Yerba Buena's own newspaper) announced Bartlett's "answer" to this provocative question: Henceforth, the village of Yerba Buena would be known as "San Francisco" in "all official communications, and public documents, or records." The *Star* flatly disputed Bartlett's assertion that "San Francisco" was an old name for the town, and for nearly two months continued to print the words "Yerba Buena" on its masthead. On March 20, however, the newspaper relented, and "Yerba Buena" became "San Francisco" in fact as well as in theory.<sup>26</sup>

Across the bay in Francisca, Robert Semple was furious. "No one ever dreamed of changing the name," he fumed, "until I handed in my deeds. . . . I can not relieve my mind of the impression, that the Alcalde saw that a city located at the head of safe ship navigation on the Bay would eventually be the principal city, and for fear that the name would be some advantage to it, being so nearly like the name of the

*In 1849, John Sutter published an ambitious plan (facing page) for the town of Suttersville in Germany.*



# PLAN VON SUTTERSVILLE.



## There was room for only one great city in Gold Rush California.

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Bay, determined to change the name of this place. Truly, the Alcalde 'is the law.' " Acceding to the inevitable, Semple announced that Francisca would be rechristened "Benicia," the second of Mrs. Vallejo's names.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the initial confusion about its name, Benicia got off to a good start. It was, from the beginning, unlike any other California town. It was the first municipality in California not founded under Spanish or Mexican authority; it was conceived as a great city, not as a village that might one day aspire to grandeur; and it was well financed. General Vallejo was the state's largest landowner, and Thomas O. Larkin (who became a partner in Benicia in May 1847) was its wealthiest businessman. Semple, who edited the state's first newspaper and presided over its first constitutional convention, was a man of purpose and dedication. Benicia, it seemed, had everything going for it.<sup>28</sup>

And, in its early years, Benicia did achieve distinction. It had California's first chamber of commerce, its first Protestant church building, its first Masonic Hall, and its first Episcopal cathedral. The first railroad ferry in the West crossed Carquinez Strait to the waterfront of Benicia, and the first California steamboat built and run by Americans was constructed there. Recognizing Benicia's strategic location, the U.S. Army established a military post on the outskirts of the city in 1849. Two years later, Benicia became permanent headquarters of the Pacific division of the U.S. Army and the location of a United States Arsenal, the first on the Pacific coast. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company, the first large industrial enterprise in the

West, came to Benicia in 1850, building docks, foundries, machine shops and offices for its far-flung fleet of ocean-going steamers. From the wharves of Benicia, ships regularly departed for Panama to pick up mail and passengers crossing the isthmus en route from Boston and New York to California.<sup>29</sup>

Benicia was the site of the first public school in California, a fact that helped establish it as an educational center of note and earn it the sobriquet, "Athens of California." It became the home of the state's first Catholic convent (predecessor of today's Dominican College in San Rafael) and the first Protestant girls' school west of the Rockies (forerunner of today's Mills College). Benicia Collegiate Institute, opened in 1855, established the state's first law school three years later.<sup>30</sup>

Benicia had boosters aplenty. Semple boasted that the town had "all the requisites to make it the great City of the West." Walter Colton, alcalde of Monterey, affirmed that Benicia "must become in time a large commercial depot." General Persifor F. Smith, military governor of California in the spring of 1849, was as positive about Benicia as he was negative about San Francisco. "The town of San Francisco," Smith charged, "is in no way fitted for military or commercial purposes; there is no harbor, a bad landing place, bad water, no supplies of provisions, an inclement climate, and it is cut off from the rest of the country except by a long circuit around the southern extremity of the bay." Benicia, Smith continued, was "a very favorable site for a town larger than it is likely to exist anywhere here for a century to come."<sup>31</sup>

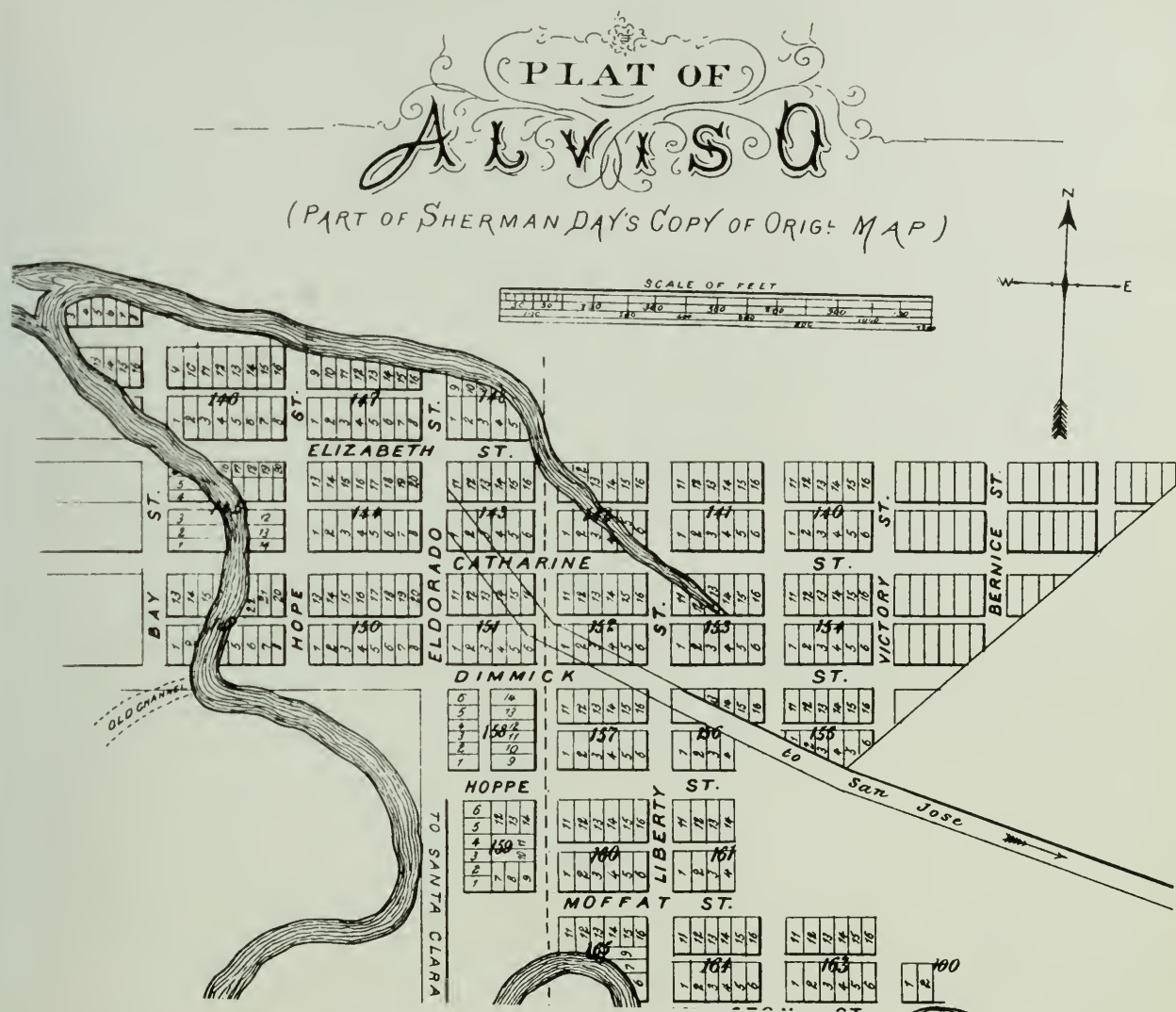
General Sherman, who helped

survey New York of the Pacific and was for several years active in the business affairs of San Francisco, was one of Benicia's warmest admirers. He thought its harbor ideal for ships and its location well suited to trade and commerce. "That Benicia has the best site for a commercial city," Sherman wrote in his *Memoirs*, "I am satisfied; and had half the money and half the labor since bestowed upon San Francisco been expended at Benicia, we should have at this day a city of palaces on the Carquinez Straits."<sup>32</sup>

But Benicia did not become a city of palaces. The legislature's decision to move the capital from Benicia to Sacramento in 1854 dealt a blow to the city's hopes. Certainly the town was not helped by its proximity to Vallejo, an ambitious municipality with many of Benicia's advantages and, by common consent, an even better harbor. The rapid growth of San Francisco throughout the 1850s boded ill for Benicia's future. There was room for only one great city in Gold Rush California, and, as San Francisco rapidly assumed the dimensions and prospects of a metropolis, the chances that Benicia might one day overtake it grew increasingly remote.

Viewed in retrospect, the pre-eminence of San Francisco may seem natural, logical, even inevitable. As early as the middle of the 1850s, the die may have been cast. Before that time, however, the result was far from certain. San Francisco in 1850 was no more likely a site for a great population and business center than Vallejo. In 1847, the village of Yerba Buena had no greater claim to the title of "city" than Benicia. Why, then, did San Francisco succeed where the others failed?





Sherman was convinced that the key was Alcalde Bartlett's decision to transform "Yerba Buena" into "San Francisco." He wrote: "The name of 'San Francisco,' however, fixed the city where it now is; for every ship in 1849-'49, which cleared from any part of the world, knew the name of San Francisco, but not Yerba Buena or Benicia; and, accordingly, ships consigned to California came pouring in with their contents, and were anchored in front of Yerba Buena. . . ."<sup>33</sup> San Francisco had secured the name. And, with the name, the glory. . . .

If you scan a map of Northern California today, or if, better yet, you set out in your car to discover

the locations of the early-day rivals of San Francisco, you will have mixed results. Vallejo and Benicia are easy to find. They are thriving towns today, with long rows of new houses crowning the hills that overlook Carquinez Strait and Suisun Bay. Alviso is a bit harder to locate. Though it lost its legal identity when it was annexed to San José in 1968,<sup>34</sup> Alviso still exists—acres of grass and a few streets of humble houses huddled against the marshy southern end of San Francisco Bay. New York of the Pacific has vanished from the map, though its location is recalled by New York Slough and New York Point, both waterfront features of the East Bay city of Pittsburg. And John Sutter's Sutterville has dis-

Streets named "Eldorado" and "Hope" appear on this Thompson & West 1876 plat map of the South Bay town of Alviso in Santa Clara County.

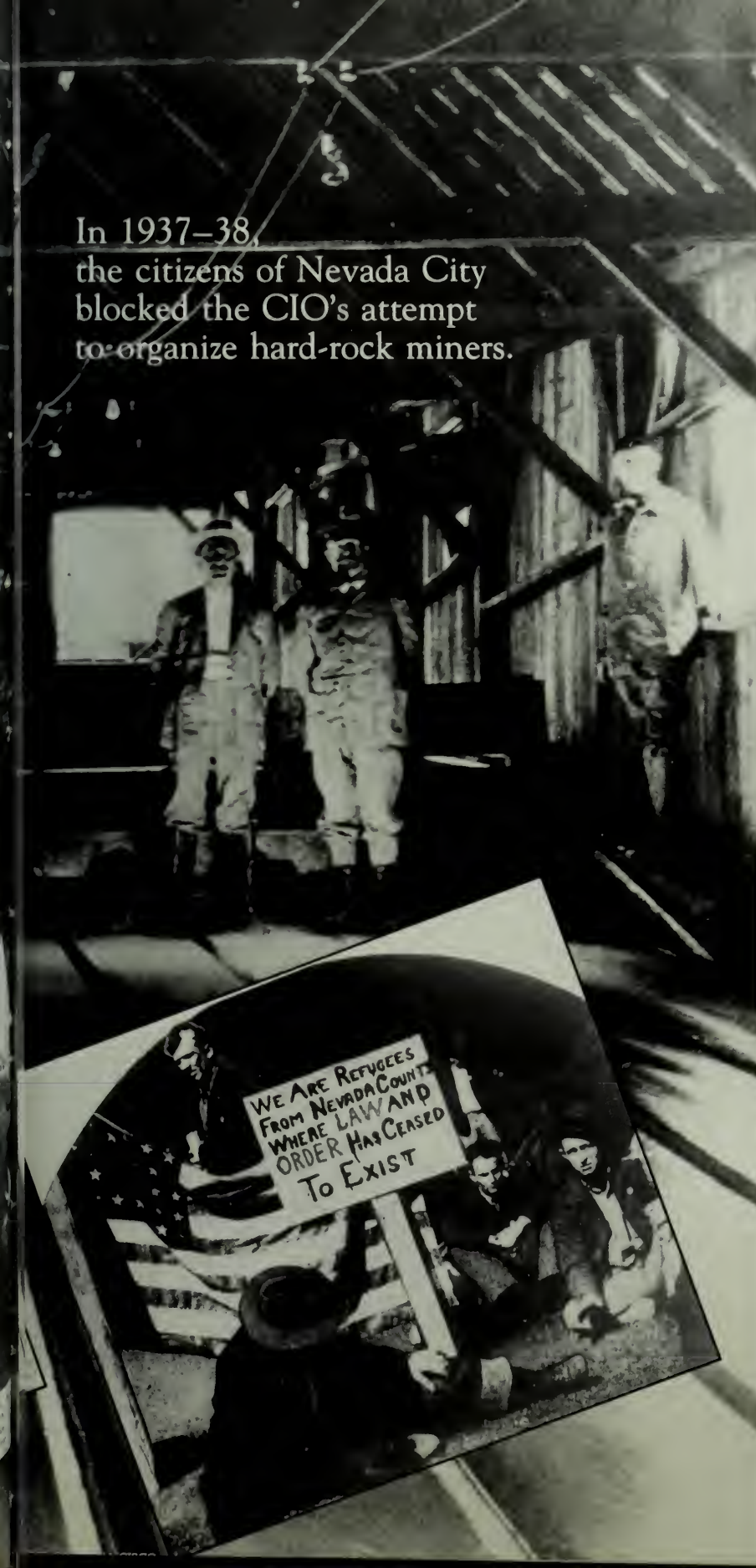
appeared in the urban sprawl of Sacramento.

Lansford Hasting's Montezuma is the most elusive of all the would-be cities. Hasting's adobe stands on a bluff about a mile-and-a-quarter east of the fishing village of Collinsville in eastern Solano County. But do not try too hard to find it. The adobe wears a cloak of white siding, the gift of a family that occupied it long after Hastings departed, and, if the promoter himself were to return to Montezuma today, he would have a hard time recognizing his place.<sup>35</sup> □

(See notes beginning on page 161.)







In 1937-38,  
the citizens of Nevada City  
blocked the CIO's attempt  
to organize hard-rock miners.

One of the most fascinating and at the same time disreputable aspects of California's history is its vigilante tradition. The period of the 1850s was especially notable in this regard as groups of private citizens, sometimes organized and sometimes not, dispensed their own brand of justice everywhere from San Francisco to the foothill settlements of Downieville and Placerville. Most people assume that this tradition of citizen justice disappeared from the state at the end of the chaotic Gold Rush period.<sup>1</sup>

A closer examination of the state's history, however, reveals many later incidents where mobs took the law into their own hands. The 1870s, for instance, saw the actions of the "pick handle brigade" in San Francisco which tried to dispel unemployed workers who were using mob action to prevent the arrival of more Chinese into the state. The period of the 1930s, in turn, saw several vigilante actions including a double lynching in San Jose and organized vigilante action in the lettuce fields of the Central Valley.<sup>2</sup>

Another example from the thirties, less well known perhaps, occurred in the heart of the hard-rock

*The Murchie Mine, two miles east of Nevada City.*

*Amid clouds of tear gas, a caravan of local cars (far left) drove through a CIO picket line while a deputy sheriff (middle, bottom) applied his boot to one of the combatants. After the melee, five strikers (center left) were charged with rioting. Sacramento Bee, January 21 and 29, 1938*

*Following the vigilante sweep of Nevada City (near left), several hundred CIO refugee families camped at the Sacramento fairground. San Francisco Chronicle, April 12, 1938*

*Tightly-knit Cornish miners carried candles on the long ride into the Empire Mine near Nevada City at the turn of the century (right). By 1925, men worked underground (far right) with small electric lamps on their helmets.*

gold mining district of California in 1938. In April of that year, a vigilante mob, aided by local law enforcement personnel, took control of the towns of Nevada City and Grass Valley, effectively blocked the roads which led to these cities, and forcibly drove a Congress of Industrial Organization (C.I.O.) union out of Nevada County.<sup>3</sup> This latter-day vigilante outburst in the Northern Mines area deserves special notice because it prevented nationally recognized mine unionism from establishing a foot-hold in the state's gold mining industry.

The expulsion of the C.I.O. from Nevada County in 1938 was the culmination of a year-long campaign to drive out what a majority of people in Grass Valley and Nevada City perceived as an alien force. Most of the C.I.O. miners were not local people. They had come primarily from other mining areas in the West, particularly Montana, where copper and other non-ferrous mining industries were suffering from the effects of the Depression. The gold mining industry in California, in contrast, was contemporaneously enjoying a revival of prosperity as a result of the increased value of gold during Roosevelt's administration, and as a consequence, these outside miners poured into the district.<sup>4</sup>

These miners generally shared the industrial and militant union ideas espoused by such organizations as the radical but long defunct Industrial Workers of the World, the old Western Federation of Miners, and

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the newly revived International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers.<sup>5</sup> The latter of these, an affiliate of the C.I.O., established a chapter in the Grass Valley and Nevada City area in 1937—Twin Cities Local #283. Exemplifying the renewed strength of national unions as a result of the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Wagner Act, legislation which jointly created the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B.), this chapter began to aggressively challenge a local camp union known as the Mine Workers Protective League. At the Banner Lava Cap mine near Grass Valley, for instance, the C.I.O. succeeded in winning a membership election battle and, as a result, emerged as the legal bargaining agent with the help of the N.L.R.B. The new union also gained a significant number of membership pledges at one of the Idaho-Maryland shafts in Grass Valley and at the Murchie mine near Nevada City.<sup>6</sup>

Although it will never be known precisely how many pledges the new union acquired, union officials claimed to have 987 members by

March of 1937. Active membership may have been closer to two hundred, or about eight percent of the miners in the district. Membership in the Mine Workers Protective League, in comparison, ranged from 1400 to 1800 during this same period. Because pledge signers were frequently fired and blacklisted by mine management, the true number of C.I.O. miners and sympathizers is not ascertainable. That the threat of competition to the established League was very real, however, is not to be questioned.

The local camp union, the Mine Workers Protective League, was not in a true sense a labor union. Until the mine management in the district accepted it as a bargaining unit for miners in their employment in 1937, in response to the C.I.O. threat, the League had primarily existed as a self-help organization. It provided death benefits to widows and support for men injured on their jobs. It also existed for social purposes, hosting an annual picnic, for instance. It had never been seriously involved in collective bargaining, however.<sup>8</sup>





The League had been created in a strike in 1919 and was active again in strikes in 1921 and 1927, notably as an anti-labor force. In the years 1937 and 1938 it was generally controlled by mine management. Its officers and members were often shift bosses or monthly, rather than hourly, employees, and mine managers sometimes forced their employees to join the League.<sup>9</sup>

Not surprisingly, the League was not sympathetic to the industrial union attitudes of the C.I.O. In fact, C.I.O. members were expelled from its ranks.<sup>10</sup> From the viewpoint of the C.I.O., therefore, this local camp union would have more appropriately been called "The Mine Owners Protective League."<sup>11</sup>

The League miners and mill workers, in turn, believed that the demands of the C.I.O. were excessive, unrealistic, and threatening to the apparent revival of California's mining economy. Even worse, they thought that C.I.O. demands could force some marginal mines to close. The new union was calling for wages higher than the average of \$5.00 a day that prevailed in the district.

They also were demanding an eight-hour day "collar to collar," meaning that travel time to and from actual work stations would be counted as part of their shifts. Travel time could add two to three hours to an individual miner's work day because of the great underground depths of some of the mines in the district.<sup>13</sup>

The C.I.O. also called for cleaner conditions in the mines where human and mule excrement was not disposed of properly. It complained about the filthy conditions that generally prevailed in the "dry rooms" where miners changed clothes and showered. In addition the C.I.O. demanded an end to the degrading practice of "skin" and lunchbox searches aimed at preventing theft of high grade ore by miners.

While these demands could be collectively viewed as beneficial to all miners, they were seen as unrealistic by League members given the mining companies' attitudes and problems in cutting costs and controlling theft. League members generally viewed the C.I.O. miners as radicals and wreckers, as little more than transients ready to move on

should their strike-prone proclivities prove detrimental to the local area.<sup>13</sup>

This resentment toward the C.I.O. by most local miners was illustrated by the immediate hostile reaction its formation engendered. Meeting in Grass Valley at midnight on March 5, 1937, a crowd estimated at up to 1,000 formed the "Nevada County Citizens Committee of 5,000" to encourage support for the Mine Workers Protective League. The new group issued a statement which was a clear warning to the C.I.O.: "History since the days of '49 tells how agitators have fared here." Members of the Committee of 5,000 also canvassed the area, securing prompt and nearly unanimous support from local businesses for the League.<sup>14</sup>

Claiming to fear the possible violent activities of the C.I.O., this new group was reported to have organized a "Nevada County Emergency Patrol." This patrol was to be made up of 400 men taken from the larger committee. They were to be trained in a military manner and deputized to protect the two towns of Grass Valley and Nevada City. An armored truck section, an ambulance section, a communication section and a possible mounted troop were also envisioned. The committee's chairman, the president of the local Chamber of Commerce, insisted that in no way was this body or its possible extensions to be seen as part of a vigilante force. Nevertheless, due to concern that it would be construed in this light by people outside of the area, it was officially disbanded one week after its creation. That it was so quickly supported, however, illustrates the pervasiveness of the public hostility towards the new union.<sup>15</sup>

*Citizens of Nevada City (photographed on a washday Monday in the 1920s) viewed the CIO newcomers to their old and relatively prosperous town with suspicion.*

The perception of the C.I.O. local as an alien and radical force by most of the local citizenry and miners was present from the very beginning of its activities. It clearly inherited the parent organization's radical reputation. Few historians today believe that Communist influence within the C.I.O. was ever significant during the 1930s. The fact that John L. Lewis utilized some Communist organizers in the national union, its affiliates, and locals was of considerable concern to political conservatives, however. While there is no evidence that Communists were in fact involved in the activities of Local #283, many Grass Valley and Nevada City residents believed that they were. The axiom "like parent, like child," established a perception of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers as, to quote a local newspaper, the "C.I.O. Communists."<sup>16</sup>

Besides having a reputation for radicalism in membership and origins, the C.I.O. was perceived as being disruptive in the methods it employed. These methods included familiar tactics such as strikes, picket lines, physical intimidation of "scabs," and, at times, destruction of property. The C.I.O. also used some new tactics in its organizational drives in major production industries. These included the sit-down strike, inexpensively produced printed materials, letter-writing campaigns, and organizations of union members' wives which directly supported strike activities.<sup>17</sup>

The organizers of Local #283 tried most of the tactics except for the sit-down strike. For example, women joined the picket lines and solicited food and clothing from local sources when need arose. On at least two occasions the C.I.O. local was ac-



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cused of direct violence against non-C.I.O. mine and mill workers in the Grass Valley and Nevada City district. Otherwise violent tactics were rarely used, and although townspeople commonly referred to dangerous C.I.O. "Beef Squads," no such groups seem to have materialized.<sup>18</sup>

Mine, Mill and Smelter organizers in Local #283 primarily used non-violent methods in their membership drive. Easily their most effective organizational device was *The Miners Voice*, a mimeographed newspaper produced in the Grass Valley and Nevada City union offices. The ability to cheaply reproduce printed information, and the expectation that the union would be protected in its right to distribute such material, was crucial to the success of the local C.I.O.<sup>19</sup>

The C.I.O. newspaper was widely distributed, particularly at the entrances to mine properties where union organization was going on. Predictably, this practice sometimes led to confrontations with mine officials. One such incident is described in a light-hearted manner in the

January 14, 1938, issue of *The Miners Voice*. Attempting to pass out its paper at the entrance of the Empire mine, an organizing committee was confronted by the mine superintendent, Fred Nobs. The paper subsequently reported:

*Taking three steps at a time the Great Nobs, Emperor of the Empire, came shouting down the stairs from his office to welcome us. He came forward on a hop like a Mexican jumping bean afflicted with the heebie-jeebies. The Emperor appeared to have lost his poise completely(.) He was even drooling a bit.*

*We had never dreamed we would make so staggering an impression on the Emperor . . . So bidding goodbye to the committee, His majesty slithered back toward his palace to curl up on his throne where he might read *The Miners Voice* undisturbed.<sup>20</sup>*

The C.I.O. *Miners Voice* continued until the local union's demise in April of 1938. The varied themes and content of the paper reflected the daily and long-term issues that the local addressed in its efforts to keep in the touch with its present and possible membership. The paper also described benefits to the com-





*In 1937, CIO organizers made inroads in the mining community by gaining membership pledges at one of the Idaho-Maryland shafts in Grass Valley (mine photograph c. 1930).*

munity which would result from the new union's national ties. Overall, the paper represented an important part of the attempt to establish the C.I.O. in Nevada City.<sup>21</sup>

**T**he calling of a strike at the Murchie mine in 1938 was the act of resistance by the C.I.O. local which ultimately goaded the local residents into vigilante action. The strike and the dogged attempts by the C.I.O. local to keep their picket line intact substantiated fears about the negative influence of the new union.<sup>22</sup>

The strike began on January 15, 1938, as a response to the termination of seventeen C.I.O. miners by Murchie mine manager Robert Hendricks. Although Hendricks cited economic reasons for his action, the C.I.O. miners claimed to have been fired for their union recruiting activities. This tactic of firing C.I.O. miners before their numbers reached a majority in the work force was an effective way of preventing the new union from using the election machinery process guaranteed by the

National Labor Relations Board.<sup>23</sup>

In response, the C.I.O. local voted for a strike. Although this action was not what they would have preferred, three truckloads of C.I.O. miners from the Banner Lava Cap mine established a picket line at the entrance of the Murchie mine on January 15. An estimated 150 Murchie miners who had signed C.I.O. pledges refused to cross the picket line. As a result, Hendricks reduced operations at the mine to a maintenance level.<sup>24</sup>

Within two days Hendricks was able to recruit about 130 miners who were willing to work. At this point Nevada County Sheriff Carl Tobiasen ordered the C.I.O. picket line, which included some of the miners' wives and children, to observe an "open road" policy by not resisting the return of these miners. Tobiasen also received help from Governor Frank Merriam, who deployed some highway patrolmen to enforce this "open road" policy.<sup>25</sup>

The C.I.O. was still hoping for a quick and peaceful resolution of its problems. Requests to the National Labor Relations Board for arbitration

on the Murchie issue had been made, and investigators were on their way. The union also called a public meeting on January 18 where it made public its demands. These included a 3¢ per hour wage increase, an eight-hour day "collar to collar," and recognition of their union by mine officials. One hostile miner attending this meeting stated that the C.I.O. miners were "reds," a remark which received applause from some members of the audience.<sup>26</sup>

On January 20 mounting tension at the Murchie mine caused by the use of special county sheriff deputies and California Highway Patrolmen to escort "loyal" or non-striking miners through the picket line erupted in violence. C.I.O. pickets tried to block a group of "loyal" miners from going to work, saying that they would not let the "scabs" go through. Tobiasen demanded that the strikers clear the road. When scuffling and rock throwing ensued, the sheriff, his deputies and the highway patrolmen retaliated with clubs, fists, and tear gas to drive the pickets back. After a brief but violent confrontation, the C.I.O. picket line dispersed, but not before injuries were sustained on both sides. Six of the C.I.O. miners were subsequently arrested for rioting, one of whom, ironically, had to be hospitalized for head injuries.<sup>27</sup>

If the sheriff and mine manager Hendricks thought this action would end the C.I.O. strike, they were soon disappointed. The pickets returned, formed their picket line again, and for the next two months maintained their vigil. Among the most serious of the difficulties they faced during this period was a storm which lasted for nearly a month and

*CIO miners called for wages higher than the prevailing \$5 a day and an eight-hour workday which would include underground travel time—up to three hours a day.*

subjected them to relentless winds, rain, and snow. In their makeshift shelters, however, these C.I.O. pickets endured this storm that regionally claimed sixteen lives in as many days.<sup>28</sup>

The strategy of the C.I.O. in the Nevada City and Grass Valley area was to maintain this strike until such time as the federal government intervened.<sup>29</sup> This waiting policy, however, inevitably added to the rising tension. Finally, the local community began considering direct action to discourage the C.I.O. organizers.

The threat of vigilante action was a real concern for Local #283 since its inception in the district in 1937. The formation of the Nevada County Citizens Committee of 5,000, and the immediate support given to it by the business and general community, clearly had a sobering effect on the leaders of the local, even though that committee was short-lived. In addition, labor martyr Tom Mooney had communicated with members of the new union from his penitentiary cell, warning of possible vigilante repression.<sup>30</sup>

On another occasion the C.I.O. paper warned about the presence in the area of what it called "fascist red-baiters," supporters of vigilante action who were reported to have come from Salinas. These shadowy characters allegedly included H.R. Sanborn, the editor of a newspaper called *The American Citizen*, and an associate, Reid Hayes. The C.I.O. paper claimed that both men had arrived to instruct local business leaders in the "establishment of an armed force in the community."<sup>31</sup> Whether in fact these individuals came to Nevada County and instructed businessmen in how to set



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up an armed force cannot be known for certain. Similar tactics had been employed, however, to suppress farm unionization by the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union in Lodi in 1933, where strikers were brutally beaten by a well-organized vigilante "Committee of 1,500" while local law enforcement officers and California Highway Patrolmen watched.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout the winter and spring of 1938 tensions between strikers and townspeople grew. Car caravans, as long as ninety-two cars, regularly passed by the Nevada City union office. On February 26 a "liberty parade" staged in Nevada City further raised C.I.O. fears of vigilante action. One marcher in this parade, which included members of the Mine Workers' Protective League, described the event as "just a demonstration, [a] sample of what we can do."<sup>33</sup> The paraders passed out a handbill entitled "True Voice of the Miners" which closed with a statement from the League:

*We deplore the suggestion that there is any intimation of vigilanteism (sic.) in*

*the common demand that the law be enforced. If there should be an outbreak of violence, we declare that the responsibility will rest squarely on the shoulders of those who, by intimidation and coercing the miners of this district to join them, have themselves invited reprisals.*<sup>34</sup>

As spring wore on, statements of concern about violent actions being planned against the C.I.O. repeatedly appeared in *The Miners Voice*. It reported increasing threats to union members by men supplied with guns by mining companies and rumors that opponents of the C.I.O. were stockpiling dynamite for use in pipe bombs.<sup>35</sup>

This concern for personal security, while perhaps exaggerated, was not without provocation on the part of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. In the 1930s C.I.O. national successes had come primarily in the major production and service industries in the middle-Atlantic states, the industrial and urban eastern and north-central states, and the major urban centers on the Pacific coast. Outside these areas, local unions could be extremely vulnerable to op-





*The CIO demanded an end to "skin" and lunchbox searches aimed at preventing theft of high-grade ore by miners.*

position. The slow process of marshalling federal support for the miners in Harlan County, Kentucky, in the 1930s, for instance, demonstrated that assistance from the federal government could not be relied on with certainty.<sup>36</sup> The violence of June 5, 1934—Bloody Thursday—when thirty-one members of the longshoremen and maritime unions were shot on the docks of San Francisco, with two fatalities, dramatically illustrated the explosive potential of such conflicts.

Nevada County's vigilante action began on the afternoon of April 5, 1938. A group composed of specially deputized individuals, miners, and business men, numbering approximately 200, removed 100 C.I.O. pickets posted at the entrance to the Murchie mine. The mob had formed that afternoon in response to a rock throwing and punching fracas earlier in the day between the C.I.O. pickets at the Murchie and a so-called "loyal" or non-striking miner. This incident, however, was merely

a pretext for doing what had been contemplated for some time.<sup>37</sup>

The mob members gathered and organized themselves on the outskirts of Nevada City, where they wrapped green ribbons around their arms for identification and drove to an area one-half mile from the mine. Armed with pick handles and rocks, the mob then marched to the mine, and a battle ensued. The pickets were hopelessly outnumbered, and after ten minutes of fighting were forced to abandon the position they had maintained for two months. *Sacramento Bee* reporter Tom Arden, who was at the scene photographing the incident, was knocked down and his camera smashed. Following these actions, the mob dispersed.<sup>38</sup>

During the rest of the day, angry groups of local men met and talked. They entered bars and cafes where they confronted C.I.O. members and told them to leave the area. Some C.I.O. members were threatened with being hung by a rope if they did not leave. That evening a mob of 100 broke into the C.I.O. office in Nevada City. Records of the union, office furnishings,

and copies of *The Miners Voice* were destroyed or carried off. When C.I.O. union officers and organizers returned the next day to the office, they were arrested, without warrants, after a tear gas assault. Another mob formed outside the building where the union men were being held.<sup>39</sup>

The highways leading to Grass Valley and Nevada City had been blocked by vigilante groups and some local law enforcement officers during the rioting to prevent any C.I.O. sympathizers from coming to the aid of the union miners. One such group, C.I.O. tunnel workers employed at the Boca Dam project near Truckee, were turned back by a road block set up on the highway east of Nevada City.<sup>40</sup> According to Al Garesio, a local Nevada County miner who was the union secretary, Sheriff Carl Tobiassen said he could not promise the arrested miners protection and told them to leave the county. At the same time Harvey Leete, the anti-C.I.O. editor of the *Nevada City Nugget*, visited the jail and, according to Garesio, told the C.I.O. union officials: "You're in a very ticklish spot. There is a very angry mob out there." Ultimately the arrested miners were turned over to some highway patrolmen who reluctantly escorted them out of the county.<sup>41</sup> By the next day all of the C.I.O. mine workers and their families had been driven out of the immediate area or had fled in fear of retaliation from angry residents.

In the aftermath of the vigilante incident, the expelled miners sought aid from state authorities. The state provided some hastily prepared facilities across from the fairgrounds at Sacramento as housing for 300 to 400 miners and their families. Peti-

tions for help were also presented to Governor Frank Merriam. The displaced miners staged a protest at the capitol in Sacramento which drew support from pro-labor forces throughout the Bay Area and the capital city. Regardless, the C.I.O. miners were never able to rebuild their union. The modern-day vigilantes in Nevada County had made that impossible.<sup>42</sup>

Members of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers local believed that the federal government and its agencies were on the side of the C.I.O. The sympathies of state government, however, were another matter. The state proved to be indifferent or hostile to the union and, instead, sympathetic to its opponents. Governor Merriam was an extremely conservative man, a businessman, in fact, with little sympathy for unions. He had demonstrated this in 1933 by ordering the National Guard into action, against the wishes of the mayor in San Francisco, in opposition to the striking longshoremen and maritime unions.<sup>43</sup> And again in January of 1938 Merriam sent the California Highway Patrol to Nevada City to assist in reopening the Murchie mine on Sheriff Tobiasen's request. The role played by the patrol in this strike was never questioned publicly, nor was the patrol's failure to actively or effectively assist the C.I.O. local against the attacks of the vigilante mobs in April.<sup>44</sup>

While Governor Merriam made no statements hostile to the Mine, Mill and Smelter refugees who came to Sacramento for help, he gave them only minimal assistance. His

# Nevada City

COVERS RICHEST GOLD AREA IN CALIF. NEVADA CITY, CALIF.

Vol. 12, No. 29. The County Seat Paper

## ALL QUIET ON CIO Leaders Expelled

### Peaceful, Normal Life Of Community Resumed

All is quiet along the Red Dog Road. There are no pickets there and the possibility of their return is remote.

The leaders of the CIO-Communist group which has plagued Nevada County for nearly three months, were last night ushered under the safe-conduct of Sheriff Carl Tobiasen across the county line to Colfax, where they were to conduct their several ways. There were eight in the departing party. Herbert F. Patton, regional director for the CIO at Boca last summer, was one of the leaders of the work undertaken by the group.

welfare department director Harold Pomeroy contested the claims for aid made by many of these miners. For the majority of the 300 to 400 refugees, only short-term aid at a camp near the fairgrounds was provided.<sup>45</sup>

Under pressure from union leaders in the state, Merriam did appoint a special committee to investigate the vigilante action in Grass Valley and Nevada City on April 11, 1938. Merriam placed Isadore M. Golden, a former judge who was serving as a member of the State Industrial Welfare Board, in charge of the committee, and included among its members Nathan F. Coombs of Napa, Monsignor Thomas E. Horgan of Sacramento, Chauncy Tramutolo of San Francisco, and Frazier Reid of San Jose. The group met in Nevada City, where it heard from representatives of the C.I.O. as well as from the leader of the Mine Workers Protective League. Its final report to the governor concluded that illegal use of force against the C.I.O. miners had occurred and that for three days law and order had indeed broken down in Nevada County.<sup>46</sup>

Instead of taking action based on the results of the report prepared by his committee, Merriam made public an account by Sheriff Carl Tobiasen which stated that everything had been under control at all times. The governor deliberately chose to overlook the fact that Grass Valley and Nevada City law enforcement personnel, including the sheriff's office, had joined with the mob to drive the C.I.O. out of the county. Consequently, no official censure of the sheriff ever came from Merriam's office.<sup>47</sup>

Attitudes of local politicians and officials matched the indifference or hostility of the state authorities. From its first day in Nevada County, the C.I.O. had experienced hostility from local government and its agencies. The onset of difficulties in the Murchie mine brought full support for mine management and a rejection of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers position by both the Nevada City and Grass Valley city councils. With little debate the Nevada County Board of Supervisors had voted the outlay of county



# ED DOG ROAD

## From Nevada Co.

# EXTRA!

## ing of Three Hundred

## eps Grass Valley Clean

## of CIO Communists

funds to provide deputies on a round-the-clock basis for the protection of mine property and to escort "loyal" miners through the picket line. The supervisors even enacted an anti-picketing ordinance which outlawed calling out such names as "scab." According to *The Miners Voice*, this ordinance also made illegal certain obscene hand gestures, intended to express disdain at the miners who crossed the picket line.<sup>48</sup>

At the time of the first Murchie incident in January, County District Attorney Vernon Stoll expressed his intention to remain neutral in the struggle until the National Labor Relations Board had issued a ruling. He was immediately besieged by protests from many local citizens, however, which moved him toward a more hostile C.I.O. stance. Soon he promised an aggressive prosecution of the men accused of rioting.<sup>49</sup>

The attitude of County Judge Raglan Tuttle was evident when he set bail for the accused rioters at \$2,000 each, an excessive amount at the time. Because of this action he became the target of an extensive letter

campaign from friends of the C.I.O. On more than one occasion Tuttle publicly expressed his anger at this response. Early in June a jury in Judge Tuttle's court returned a verdict of guilty in the two-week trial of the accused rioters after less than one hour of deliberation. The judge's stiff sentences ranged from six months in jail with a \$600 fine to ten months in jail with no fine. No probation was allowed. The isolation and defeat must have been painful to the miners and to their families and friends.<sup>50</sup>

In the aftermath of the April 1938 vigilante action, C.I.O. membership in Nevada County quickly declined. Though it had recently become the legal bargaining agent for the Banner Lava Cap mine, this action was soon reversed by mine management. C.I.O. members who had been forced to leave the district during the rioting were fired or allowed back on the condition that they accept the Mine Workers Protective League as the new bargaining agent for the mine.<sup>51</sup>

Hope for federal assistance for a

*On April 5, a posse of "loyal" miners and businessmen dispersed outnumbered pickets at the Murchie Mine, destroyed the CIO office, and blocked highways leading to Nevada City. Nevada City Nugget, April 8, 1938*

continued struggle disappeared in July of 1938. Much of the C.I.O.'s hope had been pinned upon the help of the National Labor Relations Board, which had made a favorable ruling for the Mine, Mill and Smelter local in 1938 in the case of the Idaho-Maryland mine.<sup>52</sup> On appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, however, the corporation prevailed on the grounds that the N.L.R.B. had no jurisdiction in the Idaho-Maryland case. Since technically the gold produced in the mine never left the state while property of the corporation, the requisite element of interstate commerce was lacking for N.L.R.B. intervention under the National Industrial Recovery Act.<sup>53</sup> While a strong and united local might have appealed this ruling to the Supreme Court, Twin Cities local #283 was hopelessly beaten. One of its last publications made this sad reality eminently apparent:

*We are the refugees from Nevada County.*

*We are the men and women and children who have been driven from Nevada County.*

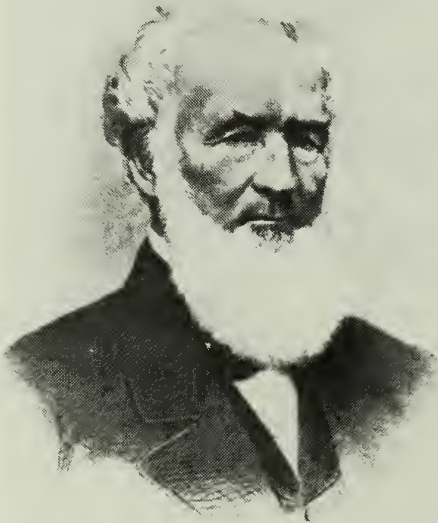
*We have been beaten.*

*We have been driven from our homes and from our jobs.<sup>54</sup>*

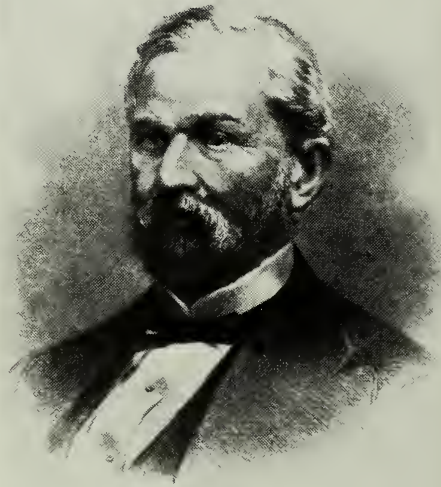
While many of the former C.I.O. miners stayed in the district rather than move on, they did so on the terms given to the Mine Workers Protective League by the mining corporations. The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers never again tried to organize the district.<sup>55</sup> Nationally recognized unionism thus remained excluded from the heart of California's hard-rock gold mining industry because of the action of lawless vigilantes. □

*(See notes beginning on page 161.)*

# Historical sources you can bank on.



*Henry Wells*



*Wm. G. Fargo*

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# REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

## *Governor Reagan, Governor Brown.*

By Gary G. Hamilton and Nicole Woolsey Biggart. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984. 262 pp. \$35 hardcover, \$15 paperback.)

Reviewed by Roger Rapoport, author of *California Dreaming: The Political Odyssey of Pat and Jerry Brown*.

With Ronald Reagan in the White House and Jerry Brown out of office, this volume offers some useful hindsight on the gubernatorial careers of both men. How did their management styles differ in Sacramento? How did they use the expressed and implied powers of their offices? What lessons can be drawn from their successes and failures?

Through extensive interviews with staff and an examination of the record, the authors suggest that the organization man or woman is the one most likely to succeed in high office. Consider the two protagonists of this book. While their ideologies differed, both men were inherently skeptical of big government's ability to solve big problems. Reagan held that layers of government had to be peeled back much as one might skin an onion. Brown argued that mankind was entering an era of limits where government could, at best, preside over a time of diminishing returns.

Neither man had a strong interest in the art of management. Reagan delegated key administrative power to his staff. At times he would even shun key meetings. For example, the authors report that part way through Reagan's second term, staff held an upper echelon meeting "to come up with ideas to focus the remaining years in office so as to avoid a lame duck administration." Ronald Reagan was a no-show.

Brown, by contrast was a good idea man but a poor manager. At times he delegated crucial projects (such as managing the Medfly crisis) to the wrong people, and on other occasions he refused to delegate matters best left to the



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experts. In this confused climate, cabinet members often managed without clear direction from their perplexing leader. And when it came to getting things done, both leaders encountered numerous obstacles.

Unlike Pat Brown, who had a virtual blank check with the legislature during his first term, Reagan and Jerry Brown found it difficult to put their ideas into practice. Far from scaling back government, Reagan presided over a budget that more than doubled during his two terms. During this period, contend the authors, "government entrenched itself in many ways as a strong, effective force in California society." And Brown's innovation and imagination was undercut by his inability to effectively use the government structure.

Government, the authors suggest, has a clearly written set of rules. Reagan ran

*Governor Ronald Reagan and Senator Milton Marks in 1960.*

up against them when he asked staff to start making welfare roll cuts only to discover that two-thirds of the people receiving this government aid were under age fifteen. Most of the rest were aged and disabled. In the Medfly crisis, Brown discovered why experienced staff that can move quickly to head off a crisis threatening the state's leading industry is essential to good government.

If both these governors were more at home with symbolism than substance, why has Reagan gone so much farther than Brown? The reason, suggest Hamilton and Biggart, was that Brown saw government as a place to generate and test ideas while Reagan was more interested in the managerial process. The Republican's mastery of management

through a skilled staff gave him better control of the politician's greatest asset, his personal image. Brown by contrast, was poor at delegating. "The ideas that flowed from every corner of the administration," write the authors, "often failed to find a place in government because no one was concerned with governing or was qualified to govern." Or as one of Brown's cabinet members put it: "We have ideas that fall. . . . They die on the floor of the legislature; they die in the departments; they die in the streets. Wherever they die, you don't get them done. What's the point in having them?" □

## *The Varieties of Ethnic Experience.*

By Micaela di Leonardo. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984. 272 pp. \$29.95 hardcover, \$9.95 paperback.)

*Reviewed by Felice Anthony Bonadio, former Fulbright Professor of American history and currently teaching at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who has recently written a biography of A.P. Giannini.*

Few ideas have seen longer service in the writing of immigration history than the one about the powerful influence of "family culture" in molding the Italian experience in the United States. Banfield, Gans, Yans-McLaughlin, Moynihan, and Glazer—the well-known tandem of "amoral familism" and "campanilismo" is rooted deep in our historical and sociological literature. This is one of those ideas that attempts to illuminate our understanding of a major American immigrant group by inadvertently manufacturing a stereotype of all its members; frugal, hard-working people who

are far more concerned with the solidarity of the family than with the general welfare. That Italian-Americans are "patriarchal," committed to the masculine ideal of self-discipline and the protection of one's own blood, is also beyond question.

Then there is the complementary idea—made fashionable by mobility historians like Glanz, Kessner, and Thernstrom—about the success or failure of various immigrant groups to advance economically. Thus, recent scholarship regarding white ethnics is deeply concerned with issues like income and occupation, both of which treat Italian-Americans not as members of a larger society but as a homogeneous mass in isolation from the country's social and economic interests. Thernstrom, for example, attributes the lower-middle class status of Italian-Americans to a distinctive value system that was passed on from generation to generation. "Particular attitudes toward work, education, thrift, and consumption patterns were inculcated into the . . . Italian family, and these influenced the occupational placement of children reared in such families."

Honestly self-described as a "dialogue in absentia" with other immigration specialists, DiLeonardo's well-argued monograph on California's Italian-Americans is an ambitious attempt to push beyond these and other academic "presumptions" and to show the importance of "mutual connections among locality, class, and gender in the assimilative process. Unlike Banfield, Gans, etc., DiLeonardo rejects as superficial the easy notion of cause and effect when considering the complex relationships between culture and class. Unlike Thernstrom, she dismisses the claim that variations in economic success among immigrant groups can best be explained by some inherited ethnic family culture.

"Rather than being concerned with the questions of how immigrants integrated themselves into regional occupation structures," she writes, "historians of nineteenth and twentieth century mobility have focused on judging ethnic groups vis-à-vis one another."

DiLeonardo's major theme, in a nutshell, is this. Despite a prodigious amount of research, interdisciplinary model builders offer very little hard evidence that mobility is a function of ethnic culture. On the contrary, when it comes to the American occupational ladder, private economic activity taken in the context of a region's social and economic development is far more important in determining the course of a family's mobility experience. This same interaction between private economic strategy and the reality of a changing economy also remains a powerful influence in shaping class, kinship, and gender differences, all of which have a far more complex and varied outcome than contemporary inquiry into the immigrant experience will allow. There is, in short, no monolithic Italian family. Most immigration specialists do not see this, or at least prefer to see only the more rigid and narrow effects of ethnic culture.

Utilizing an anthropological approach to her study, DiLeonardo's project on the whole is extremely successful. Not the least merit of her work is that she reminds us once again of how much can be learned about the operations of ethnic communities from local history. The book might have benefitted from less use of social science jargon and a more sustained discussion of California's economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Despite these minor defects, DiLeonardo's work remains a sound piece of scholarship and an important theoretical breakthrough in the field of Italian-American history. □



## Lying on the Eastern Slope: James Townsend's Comic Journalism on the Mining Frontier.

By Richard A. Dwyer and Richard E. Lingenfelter. (Miami: Florida International University Press, 1984. viii, 167 pp. \$15.00 hardcover.)

Reviewed by Gary F. Kurutz, Director of Special Collections, California State Library, and author of a recent Book Club of California publication, Benjamin C. Truman. California Booster and Bon Vivant.

Lying Jim Townsend (1838-1900), the Talking Machine of Lundy, was one of California and Nevada's most colorful and comical mining town journalists. Although not as well-known as such literary titans as Mark Twain, Dan De Quille, or John Phoenix, this yarn spinner, practical joker, public liar and confidence man nonetheless produced a brand of wit and humor that merits the attention of literary historians. Perhaps if Lying Jim had collected his writings into book form or sent stories to eastern magazines, he may have achieved lasting fame. Fortunately, because of *Lying on the Eastern Slope*, the exploits of Townsend and his colleagues have been rescued from obscurity.

Dwyer and Lingenfelter, two experts on mining towns and their newspapers, have produced an entertaining and scholarly study of journalism in this rugged region of the Sierra Nevada. It was their goal to produce a "truthful" biography of Lying Jim, pull together in one place an anthology of his best prose, and document the fraternity that existed among those journalists who eked out a living producing newspapers for boom-and-bust mining towns. In all these objectives, the authors succeeded admirably. Through this slender book, the reader will not only be regaled with wonderful tall tales but, between chuck-



The main street of Lundy, a mining town in Mono County, in 1893.



The mineshaft buildings at Lundy, anchored onto the steep mountainside in Mono County.

les, will also gain an appreciation of the dreary life that the frontier journalist endured. Humor and hoaxes, it would seem, were the tonics that ensured survival.

Townsend lived in this region from 1859 to 1900. During those four rough-and-ready decades, he slung type, cranked a printing press, penned hundreds of articles, worked a mine, and charmed (or irritated) audiences in saloons and hotels from San Francisco to Reno. His witticisms and stories appeared in the newspapers of Grass Valley, Sacramento, Antioch, Carson, and

Reno, to name just a few. But, it was in a tiny dusty town near Mono Lake called Lundy that Lying Jim spent his most productive time. Some of his best side-splitters and greatest lies are contained in the pages of its newspaper, the *Homer Mining Index*.

As Dwyer and Lingenfelter show, newspapermen like Townsend faced an enormous problem. These sparsely settled towns rarely produced enough

news to supply a journal. Consequently, the imaginative editor turned to such devices as satires, hoaxes, and made-up news to fill space. Lying Jim was a master at fabricating the news. Calling his creations "steamboats," Jim built his reputation by either amusing or hoodwinking his readers with wild and exaggerated tales of fierce fleas, mosquitos, bed bugs, and even a monster that lived in the bottom of the lake. He loved short quips as well. For example, in describing the Dead Sea of California he wrote, "The waters of Mono Lake are so buoyant that the bottom has to be bolted down." Sometimes, however, Lying Jim resorted to outright deception. In exchange for a drink or cash, he could easily be persuaded to write an article exaggerating the value of a local mine as a means of attracting unsuspecting investors. Not all found humor in his dishonest reporting, and, on one occasion, he landed in a court room.

While Townsend delighted in deadpanning life in these dull towns, others of his craft discovered that he was a newsworthy subject. Eagerly, they published stories about him. Jim fueled the Townsend legend by telling those who would listen how he helped Fremont in the Mexican War, made a fortune in the Gold Rush, established twenty-three newspapers and gave Twain the idea for the jumping frog contest. News-starved editors loved this sort of boasting, and whenever Lying Jim visited their town, it was a cause for celebration. But as the authors point out, this man who claimed to have introduced Claus Spreckles to sugar "was more lied about than lying." Even after his death in 1900, Jim was appreciated for his contributions in stretching the truth. One contemporary wrote: "There was never any question but that the most versatile liar that the West Coast ever produced was Jim Townsend."

Dwyer and Lingenfelter are to be commended for calling attention to this magnificent master of comic journalism and infinite jest. In producing this book, the

authors poured over stacks of rare Eastern Slope newspapers and journals in search of Lying Jim and Townsendisms. To support this anthology, they included a superb introduction, a narrative built around Lying Jim's prose, bibliographical notes, glossary of mining terms, index, map and photographs. All-in-all, this is a first class piece of Western Americana, and this reviewer can find little to fault. In summary, *Lying on the Eastern Slope* will provide enjoyment to anyone interested in mining towns, print shops, newspaper publishing and the lives of those great western talkers and liars who contributed to the richness of California's literary history. □

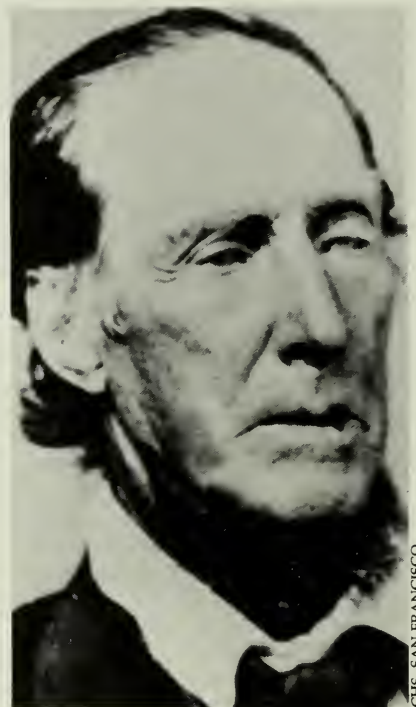
## *Journal Of A Mountain Man*

By James Clyman. Introduction and Editing by Linda M. Hasselstrom. (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1984. iv, 205 pp. \$9.95 paperback.)

*Reviewed by Robert G. Fricke, Professor of American and California history, most recently at West Valley College, Saratoga, California.*

*Journal Of A Mountain Man* is a fascinating diary and narrative of James Clyman, mountain man and solid citizen of the frontier. Although a lesser known mountain man, Clyman was an outstanding figure during the heydays of the Rocky Mountain and inter-mountain West fur trade. Clyman's experiences reflect his good fortune to be at a historic place at the right historic time.

The outstanding characteristic of the journal is its detail and objectivity. Unlike many other mountain men's stories, Clyman's account of his adventures is vivid and sober but not exaggerated. He is meticulous and almost dispassionate in recording exciting escapes and desperate situations. Clyman describes his friendships with Jedediah Smith, Wil-



*Literate mountain man, James Clyman*

liam Sublette, and Thomas Fitzpatrick in a sensitive and humorous fashion.

In order to understand and appreciate Clyman's diary, one should know James Clyman, the person. Whereas many of his companions were crude, illiterate, social runaways, James Clyman was a well-educated and literary person who was a surveyor and a poet. Perhaps his surveyor background explains the fact that the journal is a meticulous and accurate record of his prophylactic peregrinations. After his trapping career ended, Clyman became a businessman, frontier soldier and respectable citizen. His diaries reveal a man who treasured basic values and qualities of honesty, intelligence, self-confidence and common sense.

The *Journal* is divided into significant phases of James Clyman's life. One period is his early years (1823-27) in the Rockies when he describes the famous grizzly bear attack on Jedediah Smith. A second is his return to the settlements where he serves in the Black Hawk War along with Abraham Lincoln. The chapters and notebooks that chronicle his years on the Oregon Trail and in Oregon are fascinating and extremely humor-



ous. But, for California historians, the outstanding segment of the journal is his descriptions of people and places in California during the 1840s, the time of "Manifest Destiny." Clyman does profess a subjective gringo mentality when he describes the Californians as a "proud, lazy, indolent people." In all, he must have liked California society since the final chapter covers his retirement in California.

In the introduction, the editor effectively summarizes Clyman's role as a mountain man and "rugged individualist" of the middle nineteenth century. Each chapter includes a brief introduction which gives background information, and there are good explanatory notes at the chapters' end. Anyone who is interested in the mountain men and the post-War of 1812 western movement should include *Journal Of A Mountain Man* in his library. □

### *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577-1580, Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of Drake's Circumnavigation of the Earth.*

Edited by Norman J.W. Thrower. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. 240 pp. \$28.00.)

Reviewed by Robert H. Power, former member of the State of California Sir Francis Drake Commission and former CHS trustee.

Norman Thrower, a noted professor of geography at UCLA, has turned ten essays, orally presented in 1977-80 as part of the quadricentennial commemoration of Drake's voyage, into a book by the addition of a preface and an index. Thrower served as president of the State of California Sir Francis Drake Commission from 1975-1980, and much of the

scholarly direction of that celebration was directly related to his leadership.

Thrower's preface explains that Drake, by his naming and claiming of Nova Albion and his later diplomacy in southeast Asia, "laid the foundation of a British commonwealth overseas." Unfortunately, none of the selected essays develops this enticing claim for Nova Albion. However, Thrower appropriately presents in his preface the memorable sermon laudatory of Drake preached at Grace Cathedral on San Francisco's Nob Hill by the Lord Bishop of London.

In a resonant voice, the Lord Bishop declared: "Francis Drake . . . was loathed and feared by the Spaniards . . . but in England he became a legend in his own lifetime. Next to the Queen, he personified the hopes and the ideas of an emerging nation." This sermon inspired the British Dependencies as far away as the British Virgin Islands and Tristan da Cunha recently to issue Drake commemorative postage stamps.

The work under review contains four key essays by the finest British historical scholars in the fields of exploration, navigation, discovery, and cartography. David Waters, David B. Quinn, Kenneth Andrews, and Helen Wallis, concisely present a summary of their lifetime study into what Andrews once aptly titled, "The Age of Drake."

The exchange of knowledge between British and California scholars was not all one-sided during the Drake quadricentennial. For instance, Helen Wallis of the British Library incorporated into her augmented essay information gained in California on the origins of the famous Drake Hondius Map and used the Drake Mellon Map as a full color fold-out to illustrate her essay. Of special importance was Wallis' acceptance of the California opinion that some of the verses in the 1582 poem *De Navigatione* by Stephen Parmenius referred to Drake's annexation of California in 1579.

Michael J. B. Allen suggests that Drake did not stimulate the contemporary poets because he "returned to England

in 1580 with a fortune, but no vision, no Nova Albion as an enchanted isle." Allen's observation ignored Parmenius' *De Navigatione*, cited by fellow essayist Wallis.

W. Jewkes discusses how Drake eventually penetrated the very minds of British seamen; hence, Jewkes summarizes that Drake takes his place with other legendary figures like "King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Barbarossa . . . whose deaths have seemed unacceptable because in life they embodied so much vitality and exerted so much influence on larger affairs."

By the time one reaches the volume's final entry in Benjamin Draper's "Bibliographic Items" which describes a portion of a patriotic opera performed on London's Drury Lane in 1658-59, a reader may fairly perceive that Sir Francis Drake may have been the most significant world figure to ever explore the land that was to be known as the State of California.

Hopefully, the next time the University of California Press publishes on Drake, it will recognize that his famous ship was the *Golden Hinde*, not *Golden Hind*. □

### *Obras Californianas del Padre Miguel Venegas, S.J.*

Edition studies by W. Michael Mathes, bibliographies and indices by Vivian C. Fisher and E. Moisés Coronado, prologue by Miguel León-Portilla. (La Paz: Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur, 1977-1983. 5 volumes. \$200.00. Exclusive distribution of limited edition by Howard Karno Books, Santa Monica, CA 90406.)

Reviewed by Iris H.W. Engstrand, Professor of History, University of San Diego, and author of *Spanish Scientists in the New World: The*

*Eighteenth Century Expeditions (1981) and Royal Officer in Baja California 1768-1770: Joaquín Velázquez de León (1976).*

Professor Michael Mathes has brought to completion a monumental task—the publication of the major historical works of Padre Miguel Venegas, a noted mid-eighteenth century jesuit priest who in 1739 completed the first general account of the voyages of discovery and early settlements in California. Father Venegas was born in Puebla de los Angeles in 1680, and his life spanned the expansion of Jesuit activity in New Spain under the dynamic leadership of Padres Francisco Eusebio Kino, Juan María Salvatierra, and others connected with the move into Baja California. Venegas, a professor of moral theology and student of the sciences, first wrote a biography of Salvatierra's companion, Father Juan Bautista Zappa of Milan, who labored as a missionary in and near Mexico City until his death in 1694. The life of Zappa inspired Salvatierra to open up a mission field in California, and this in turn inspired Venegas to write a history of both. The five volumes reviewed herein are the result of that inspiration, but the finished product is the culmination of a much more complicated story.

Although Venegas never personally visited the province he so carefully wrote about, he embarked upon his work with the highest level of historical methodology. He collected original reports and annual letters of the missionaries, consulted memoirs and diaries, sent out questionnaires, and included all relevant information in the ten books of his extensive effort entitled "Empresas Apostóli-

cas de los PP. Misioneros de la Compañía de Jesús, de la Provincia de Nueva España obradas en la conquista de California. . . ." This volume is reproduced as Volume IV of the present series and is a facsimile of Ms. M-M 1701 in The Bancroft Library, containing 709 pages in Venegas' hand. The original manuscript was never published because of its references to the weak defenses of California and the danger of foreign intervention. It was filed away for ten years and then sent to Madrid for revision, editing, and publication.

The task was given to Andrés Marcos Burriel, a Jesuit scholar who had long desired to serve in California, but instead was assigned reorganization of the crown's archives and libraries. Early in 1750, while in Toledo, Burriel received the manuscript of "Empresas Apostólicas" and, by working during his free hours at night, began to update the work. He tried to get additional information but did not even know if Venegas were still alive. In four years he produced "Noticia de la California" which then passed through a long process of revision, censorship, and licensing by royal officials, which took another three years. It was based upon "Empresas Apostólicas" but followed a three-volume format and included four maps.

The problems faced by Burriel (added to the original difficulties of Venegas) and the events leading to the book's printing in 1757 are well chronicled by Mathes in his *Historical-Biographical Introduction*, a 27-page English supplement to the volumes. The 1757 Madrid edition of *Noticia de la California* is reproduced in Volumes I, II and III of the present work. The first volume is enhanced by

the prologue of Miguel León-Portilla and the bibliographies and analytical index prepared by Vivian Fisher and E. Moisés Coronado. Volume III also includes four maps and a handwritten "Apéndice VII" by Burriel.

While Burriel edited the California manuscript, another work by Venegas was published in Mexico City in 1754. This was a biography of Father Salvatierra called *El Apóstol Mariano Representado en la Vida del V.P. Juan María de Salvatierra* and appears as Volume V of the present series. Because Venegas had collected so much of the material pertaining to the early Jesuits, he prepared a very lengthy manuscript which, because of the high cost of printing, was assigned to the Jesuit intellectual Father Juan Antonio de Oviedo for editing. A native of Bogotá, Oviedo had wide literary experience and was well qualified for the task.

The Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur is to be praised for making these rare volumes available to the general public in addition to those specializing in the history of the two Californias. *Noticia de la California* was received with great interest upon its first publication and inspired a number of writers, especially Jesuits Johann Baegert and Miguel del Barco, to correct, recast, and augment certain portions. Undoubtedly these volumes will inspire another generation of historians to review and reevaluate the early history of Baja California, amplifying once more Venegas' pioneer effort. The bibliographies and cumulative index to all three works will make continued study infinitely more enjoyable. Dr. Mathes and his co-workers should be congratulated for a difficult job well done. □



# CALIFORNIA CHECK LIST

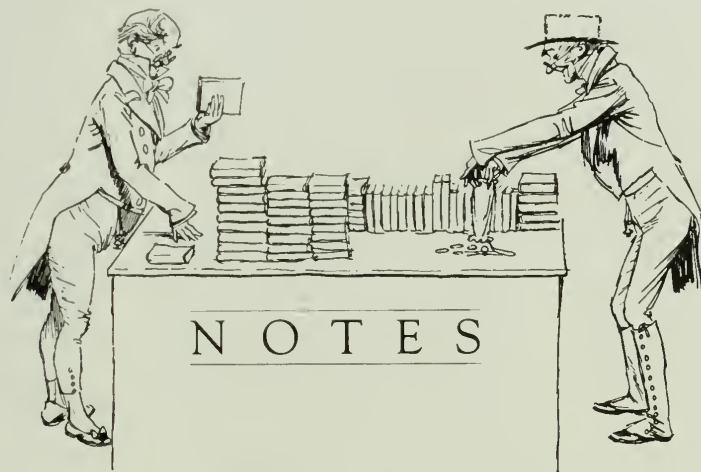
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**Zelinsky and Olmsted, Upriver Boats to Red Bluff, pp. 86-117.**

1. Otis Oldfield, "Steamer Dover and Around-About," 1:133, unpublished ms. copy of typescript at National Maritime Museum at San Francisco. Several versions of this illustrated manuscript were revised by Otis Oldfield, but in no title is the date given of the *Dover's* voyage to Butte City that is the basis for this work. By deduction from his references on charts and to other specific dates, this trip took place in 1930.
2. F.W. Beechey, *Voyage to the Pacific* (London: Henry Colburn & William Bentley, 1831), vol. II, p. 5.
3. H.H. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco: History Company, 1886), vol. IV, p. 144.
4. Alice Reading ms., typescript, The Bancroft Library; P.B. Reading to brother, January 2, 1844, The Bancroft Library.
5. *Tehama County California, Description of its scenery . . . schools, churches, mines, mills* (San Francisco: Elliott & Moore, 1880), p. 12.

6. Alice Reading ms.
7. William Robinson Grimshaw, "His Narrative of Life & Events in California During 'Flush Times', particularly 1848-49," manuscript in The Bancroft Library.
8. John Haskell Kemble, "The First Steam Vessel to Navigate San Francisco Bay," *California Historical Quarterly*, 14:144; *Alta California*, February 16, 1848.
9. *Hutching's California Magazine*, July 1859, p. 6; Peter Lassen Supplementary Biographical Particulars, p. 512; J. Goldsborough Bruff, *Gold Rush, The Journals, Drawings and Other Papers of J. Goldsborough Bruff* (New York: Columbia Press, 1949), p. 340.
10. *Sacramento Transcript*, June 20, 1850. That steamboating on the Sacramento came of age in the spring of 1850 is confirmed by a harbormaster report of "the steam vessels plying between Sacramento, San Francisco and the upper towns . . . from May 6th to May 31st" as published in the *Weekly Placer Times*, June 28, 1850:

Names	Trips	Tonnage
Senator	6	755
Gold Hunter	8	435
El Dorado	7	153¼
McKim	4	326¾
Hartford	6	251
Gov. Dana	18	67
Sacramento	8	38
Yuba	9	20
Phoenix	3	24
Linda	6	52½
New England	3	21
Lawrence	7	36¼
Star	3	20
Excel. & Scow	1	8
Aetna	1	19
Jack Hays	3	42

16 Steamers—Tonnage 2269

11. *Sacramento Union*, June 4, 1855.
12. *Tehama County California*, p. 63.
13. *Sacramento Daily Union*, June 3, 1852. Adding up the mileage and comparing it to the *Orient's* voyage time of 15 hours (which would probably be correct) results in the impossible

speed of 32 mph. As river steamers might make 4 mph but were more apt to steam along at 2 mph, we are left with the conclusion that the writer, anxious to be credited with the first "longest voyage," got his estimates from the captain by generously adding up the revolutions of the boat's wheel as the *Orient* maneuvered around the bends. The river was shortened in later years by the Corps of Engineers which straightened out hairpin turns in the interest of safety. However, riverboat pilots claimed that "the bends held the water," and they were opposed to too much interference beyond snag removal and necessary dredging. Otis Oldfield prepared the chart below comparing the Company's Schedule as reported by the captain of the *Dover* in 1930, with mileage estimated from newspaper accounts between 1850 and 1931.

Company's Schedule per Capt. of <i>Dover</i> .	1930 River Miles	News. Est. 1850	News. Est. 1880	Calif. Rep. 1917	U.S. Corps of Engineers 1931
Sacramento to Knights Ldg.	40	—	—	—	—
Knights Ldg. to Colusa	95	168	105	90	86.2
Colusa to Butte City	118	183	—	—	—
Butte City to Sids	129	—	—	—	—
Sids to Monroeville	143	—	—	—	—
Monroeville to Chico	148	—	—	147	137.5
Chico to Red Bluff	201	(360)	205	199	189.9

- In 1930, Knights Landing to Red Bluff by road was 133 dry land miles.
14. J.A. McGowan, "Freighting to the Mines," PhD thesis, 1939, p. 44, The Bancroft Library.
15. *San Francisco Evening Journal*, November 2, 1852.
16. Beach, *History & Directory of Nevada County*, p. 191.
17. *Shasta Courier*, July 9, 1853.
18. Ruth Hitchcock, "Leaves of the Past 1828-1880," Occasional Publication #10 (Association for Northern California Records & Research, n.d.), p. 475.
19. *Alta California*, January 31, 1853.
20. Ibid.
21. Oldfield, "Steamer *Dover*," 140-143.
22. Ibid., 18.
23. Born in Sacramento in 1890, Otis Oldfield had an early love of maps.

Expelled from school at the age of nine for coloring the maps in a textbook, he went down to the riverfront and made friends with the captains of riverboats. Drawn to sketching and painting, he studied art in San Francisco; in 1911 he made his way to Paris and enrolled in the Julian Academy. Successful in France, where in 1919 he was appointed the only American artist on a French national committee to plan a Temple of Victory, Oldfield left France in 1924 on the famous liner *Leviathan* to return to California.

Controversy and acclaim followed Otis Oldfield for the rest of the 1920s and 1930s, when his "ultra-modern" paintings were exhibited in New York and throughout the West. Taking an apartment on San Francisco's Telegraph Hill, he taught art classes in the evenings; by day he watched shipping activities on the bay

- through his binoculars, became friends with the crews, and prowled around the vessels, sketching, painting, and even measuring them. During World War II Oldfield worked as a shipfitter's draftsman on the Liberty ships at Fort Mason before returning to art instruction. He painted until the day he died, which was in the late spring of 1969 in San Francisco.
24. Oldfield, "Steamer *Dover*," 135.
25. Ibid., 24.
26. Ibid., 135.
27. Ibid., 26.
28. Ibid., 86.
29. Hitchcock, "Leaves," p. 584-585.
30. J.S. Hittell, *Commerce & Industry of the Pacific Coast* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft, 1882), p. 280.
31. Captain John Leale, *Recollections of a Tule Sailor 1850-1932* (San Francisco:

- George Fields, 1939), pp. 46-47.
32. Oldfield, "Steamer *Dover*," 53-4.
33. Ibid., 20.
34. Hitchcock, "Leaves," p. 10.
35. *Tehama County California*, pp. 128-129.
36. *Red Bluff Independent Beacon*, December 6, 1871.
37. Oldfield, "Steamer *Dover*," pp. 113-117.
38. Ibid., 153b.
39. Ibid., 179.
40. Ibid., 162b.

Of great help in research on this article but not cited are the following:

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"History of Sacramento Riverboats," by Joanne Hitchcock, 1958 research paper at California State University, Chico.

"The Sacramento River and the Development of Early Tehama County, 1848-1868," by Arthur Lee Turner, research paper, 1967, at California State University, Chico.

Estabrook, Wallace, pp. 118-121.

1. Puccini's opera *La Fanciulla del West* was produced in 1910 in New York.
2. William Winter, *The Life of David Belasco* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1918), p. 75.
3. Jacob Lynn, Certificate of Death, City and County of San Francisco, November 23, 1917; *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 25, 1917. Jake first traveled to San Francisco in 1852 or 1855. In 1855 he brought with him several popular banjo songs from New York, including "Hot Corn" and "Shucking of de Corn" which he got from Dan Emmet, and "The Days of '49." *San Francisco Bulletin*, July 28, 1917.
4. Jacob Lynn, unpublished diary, California State Library, Sacramento, California (random, penciled notes in an address book jotted down by Jake at the end of his life); Winter, *The Life of David Belasco*, 75.
5. *San Francisco Chronicle*, November



- 25, 1917; *San Francisco Directory*, see entries for Jacob Lynn and Jacob Lynn, Jr., for the years 1858, 1859-60, 1859, 1860-61, 1861, 1862, 1881, 1883-4.
  6. *San Francisco Examiner*, October 26, 1913.
  7. Benjamin Maynard Noid, *History of the Theatre in Stockton, Calif. 1850-1892* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1968), p. 228; Playbill, Forrest Melodeon, April 12, 1861, in Constance Rourke's *Troupers of the Gold Coast or the Rise of Lotta Crabtree* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1928), p. 164. Lynn Diary; *San Francisco Examiner*, October 26, 1913. The trip is summarized in Rourke, *Troupers of the Gold Coast*, p. 161-164, and in David Dempsey's *The Triumphs and Trials of Lotta Crabtree* (New York: William Morrow, 1968), p. 136-137. Jake describes the rescue in his diary.
  8. *San Francisco Examiner*, October 26, 1913.
  9. *Ibid.*
  10. *Ibid.*
  11. *Ibid.*
  12. *Ibid.*
  13. Margaret G. Watson, *Silver Theatre: Amusements of the Mining Frontier in Early Nevada, 1850-1864* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark, 1964), p. 201, 183.
  14. Rourke, *Troupers of the Gold Coast*, p. 161; *San Francisco Examiner*, October 26, 1913; Lynn Diary; Noid, *Theatre in Stockton*, 244; *The Journals of Alfred Doten, 1849-1903* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1973), p. 1267. The California Historical Society has the original Playbills from the Willows for November 15 and 22, 1863; for the Banjo trio of Charlie Backus, Joe Taylor and Jake Wallace on January 3, 1864; and for the Farewell Benefit of Dan Bryant, November 29, 1867.
- California Press, 1959), 25; Gladys Hansen, *San Francisco Almanac: Everything You Want To Know About The City* (San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1980), p. 2.
3. J.N. Bowman, "Sutterville Two Years Older Than Sacramento," *Sutterville Star* [Sacramento], November 13, 1952, p. 1. Sutter's diary for February 7, 1846, states: "Capt. Hastings & Bidwell finished laying out the town—[.] [John A. Sutter], *New Helvetia Diary, a Record of Events Kept by John A. Sutter and his clerks at New Helvetia, California, from September 9, 1845, to May 25, 1848* (San Francisco: The Society of California Pioneers, 1939), p. 26.
  4. John A. Sutter, Jr., *Statement Regarding Early California Experiences*, edited, with a biography, by Allan R. Ottley (Sacramento: Sacramento Book Collectors Club, 1943), p. 17. William T. Sherman, who inspected the site, wrote: "At Sutterville, the plateau of the Sacramento approached quite near the river, and it would have made a better site for a town than the low, submerged land where the city [Sacramento] now stands. . . ." William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman*, Vol. I (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1875): 77.
  5. Thor Severson, *Sacramento, An Illustrated History* (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1973), pp. 51-52; Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. VI (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888): 447.
  6. Captain B. Schmoelder, *Neur praktischer Wegweiser fuer auswanderer nach Nord-Amerika, in drei abtheilungen mit karten, plaenen und ansichten . . .* (Mainz: Le Roux'sche hofbuchhandlung, 1849), facing page 78.
  7. Mildred Brooke Hoover, Hero Eugene Rensch and Ethel Grace Rensch, *Historic Spots in California*, third edition, revised by William N. Abeloe (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 513.
  8. Lansford W. Hastings, *The Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California . . .* (Cincinnati: George Conclin, 1845); Bancroft, *History of California*, III: 778; Mary Nance Spence, "Introduction" to Lansford W. Hastings, *The Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), p. viii.
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  10. Donald C. Biggs, *Conquer and Colonize: Stevenson's Regiment and California* (San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1977), pp. 224-228; Sherman, *Memoirs*, I: 73-74.
  11. *Alta California* [San Francisco], May 17, 1849, p. 2; Stephen Massett, *Drifting About* (New York: Carleton, Publisher, 1863), p. 113; Biggs, *Conquer and Colonize*, 226, 227-228; Ernest A. Wiltsee, "The City of New York of the Pacific," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, March 1933, pp. 28-30.
- When Frank Marryat visited the site in May 1851, he concluded that the town had already failed: "The working human tide of California ebbed and flowed past New York with great regularity." Frank Marryat, *Mountains and Molehills, or Recollections of a Burnt Journal* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1855), p. 202.
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  13. Hoover et al., *Historic Spots in California*, pp. 428, 444.
  14. Scott, *San Francisco Bay Area*, p. 29; H. Brett Melendy and Benjamin F. Gilbert, *The Governors of California: Peter H. Burnett to Edmund G. Brown* (Georgetown, California: The Talisman Press, 1965), pp. 25-26, 29.
  15. E. Gould Buffum, *Six Months in the Gold Mines* (London: Richard Bentley, 1850), pp. 218-219.
  16. James C. Curtis, "New Chicago of the Far West: Land Speculation in Alviso, California, 1890-1891," *California History*, Spring 1982, p. 38-39, 41; *New Chicago at Port Alviso: Some Printed Facts Selected from the*

# McGinty, Could One Have Been "The City"? pp. 132-141.

1. John Steinbeck, *Travels With Charley In Search of America* (New York: The Viking Press, 1962), p. 175.
2. Mel Scott, *The San Francisco Bay Area: A Metropolis in Perspective* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of

Writings of Those Who Know (San Jose and San Francisco: Roberts, Austin & Darby and Middleton & Sharon, 1890), p. 6.

17. Curtis, "New Chicago of the Far West," p. 44.
18. M.G. Vallejo, "Memorial of Gen. Vallej6 [sic] and others relative to the Permanent Location of the Seat of Government," dated April 3, 1850, Appendix "T" to *Journal of the Senate of California, First Session*, pp. 498, 499; Myrtle M. McKittrich, *Vallejo, Son of California* (Portland, Oregon: Binford & Mort, 1944), p. 299.
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20. *Journal of the Assembly of California, Fourth Session*, pp. 5, 132-133; "Release from Gen. M.G. Vallejo to the State of California," Appendix No. 25 to *Journal of the Senate of California, Fourth Session*, pp. 3-4. The legislature met at Benicia on February 11, 1853.
21. Bancroft, *History of California*, VII: 581; Scott, *San Francisco Bay Area*, 47-48, 60; *Daily Evening Bulletin* [San Francisco], May 22, 1871, p. 2; *The Prospects of Vallejo: or Evidences that Vallejo Will Become a Great City*, reprinted from a series of articles in the *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, March to July 1871 (Vallejo: Chronicle Steam Printing House, 1871), p. 50.
22. Scott, *San Francisco Bay Area*, p. 60.
23. *Ibid.*; Bancroft, *History of California*, VII: 581-583, 686. Bancroft says the Central Pacific "left Vallejo to stagnation."
24. Platon M.G. Vallejo, "Memoirs of the Vallejos," arranged for publication by James H. Wilkins, Chapter XVI, *The Bulletin* [San Francisco],

February 13, 1914, p. 7.

25. Robert Brueggemann, *Benicia: Portrait of an Early California Town* (San Francisco: 101 Productions, 1980), p. 3; *The Californian* [Monterey], November 28, 1846, pp. 2-3; February 6, 1847, p. 2. Although she was baptized as Francisca Maria Felipa Benicia Carrillo, Mrs. Vallejo was known to her family and friends as Francisca Benicia. Madie Brown Emparan, *The Vallejos of California* (San Francisco: The Gleeson Library Associates, University of San Francisco, 1968), p. 195.
26. *The California Star* [Yerba Buena], January 30, 1847, p. 4; March 20, 1847, p. 2.
27. *The Californian* [San Francisco], June 19, 1847, p. 2.
28. Brueggemann, *Benicia*, p. 3; Bancroft, *History of California*, V: 715.
29. Benicia Chamber of Commerce, *Benicia* (Benicia: Benicia Chamber of Commerce, Inc., 1971), [2, 3]; Brueggemann, *Benicia*, pp. 64, 8.
30. Brueggemann, *Benicia*, p. 13; Richard H. Dillon, *Great Expectations: The Story of Benicia, California* (Benicia: Benicia Heritage Book, Inc., 1980), pp. 161-162; Rosalind A. Keep, *Fourscore and Ten Years, A History of Mills College* (Oakland, California: Mills College, 1946), pp. 10-11.
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32. Sherman, *Memoirs*, I: 55-56.
33. Sherman, *Memoirs*, I: 56.
34. Richard Immel, "The Slow, Unhappy Death of Alviso," *San Francisco Magazine*, August 1969, p. 22.
35. When the writer visited the house on April 6, 1983, it stood empty and forelorn on its bluff overlooking

Suisun Bay. A cyclone fence separated the weed-clogged yard from the equally weed-clogged road, but the gate was ajar and the door to the house open. Bees (or wasps) swarming about the eaves and windows presented a formidable obstacle to intrusion.

# Beesley, "Communists and Vigilantes in the Northern Mines, pp. 142-152.

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2. *Ibid.*, pp. 236-237, 497. See also, Brian McGinty, "Shadow in St. James Park," *California History*, 57 (Winter 1978-79): 290-307.
3. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 5, 1938; *Nevada City Nugget*, April 8, 1938; interview with former master mechanic of Empire mine, Phil Keast, August 9, 1978.
4. Lynn Bramkamp, Jr., "The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in Nevada County, California: 1937-38" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Sacramento, California, 1969), pp. 3-4; Irving Bernstein, *Turbulent Years: A History of the American Worker, 1933-41* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 106, 769-774; David Brody, "The New Deal and the Emergence of Mass-Production Unionism," in Alanzo L. Hamby, ed., *The New Deal* (N.Y.: Weybright and Talley, 1969), pp. 58-63; David Selvin, *A Place in the Sun: A History of California Labor* (San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 42-45.
5. Brankamp, Jr., "International Union" 3-4.
6. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, March 2, March 5, May 20, April 16, April 20, 1937; January 11, January 16, 1938.
7. Brankamp, Jr., "International Union" 6, 51; *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 13, 1938.
8. Interview with Keast, August 9, 1978.
9. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 13, 1938, p. 13.

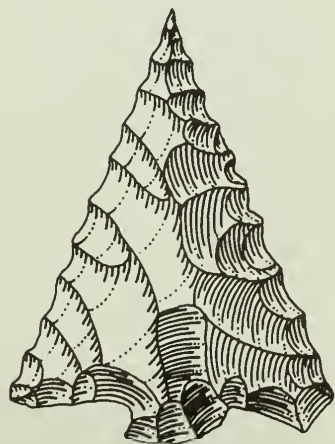


10. "Did the M.W.P.L. Sell Out?" undated C.I.O. mimeograph issued c. March 28, 1937.
11. "Special Bulletin," issued as mimeograph sheet by Local #283, May 29, 1938; "True Fact," special bulletin issued by Local #283 prior to December 5, 1937; "Nob's Steam Roller Again Crushes Opposition," undated C.I.O. mimeograph issued prior to March 21, 1937.
12. Interview with Keast, August 9, 1978.
13. "Gold Miners News," C.I.O. mimeograph, April 24, 1937; *The Miners Voice* January 7, 1938; interview with Keast, August 9, 1978.
14. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 13, 1938: "Notice to Members of Recognized Organized Labor And Its Friends," undated C.I.O. mimeograph, issued on or after April 18, 1937.
15. Bramkamp, Jr., "International Union," p. 11; *Grass Valley Morning Union*, March 16, 1937; *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 13, 1938, p. 13.
16. Irving Bernstein, *A History of American Labor, 1920-1933: The Lean Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), p. 85; Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 782-783; William Leuchtenberg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal 1932-1940* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 282; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Coming of the New Deal* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), p. 419; *Nevada City Nugget*, April 8, 1938.
17. Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 769-774; Donald R. McCoy, *Coming of Age: The United States During the 1920s and 1930s* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1973), pp. 272-273.
18. *Nevada City Nugget*, April 8, 1938; interview with former millman of the Empire Mine, Virgil Angove, who was assaulted by two C.I.O. workers in 1938; *Grass Valley Morning Union*, February 20, 1938.
19. In the form of *The Miners Voice*, the C.I.O. mimeograph publication ran from December 9, 1937, to the destruction of the mimeograph machine in the I.U.M.M.S.W.'s local office in April 1938.
20. *The Miners Voice*, January 14, 1938.
21. The first edition of *The Miners Voice* appeared on December 9, 1937. The paper discussed the differences between a weak camp union such as the Mine Workers Protective League and a C.I.O.-affiliated union local. It mentioned the wage benefits that would result from joining the latter and announced the next meeting of Local #283 and Ladies Auxiliary #45.
22. A good example of the community's attitude toward the C.I.O. local and its strike can be found in a series of articles, "That the Public May Know," authored by the executive editor of the *Grass Valley Morning Union*. In the first article he labeled the C.I.O. as outside trouble-makers. In the second he stated: "The Grass Valley-Nevada City mining district, its citizenry, its mine operators, its mine workers, seek nothing, ask nothing—except to be let alone." See *Grass Valley Morning Union*, February 17 and 18, 1938.
23. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 16, 1938.
24. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 10, 1938, p. 13; *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 16, 1938.
25. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 16 and 18, 1938.
26. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 18, 1938.
27. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 21, 1938; *Sacramento Bee*, January 20, 1938, p. 1.
28. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, February 12 and 13, 1938.
29. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 19, 1938.
30. "Notice to Members of Recognized Organized Labor and Its Friends," C.I.O. mimeograph issued on or after April 18, 1937; *The Miners Voice*, December 9, 1937, February 11 and 26, 1938; *Grass Valley Morning Union*, February 8, 1938.
31. "Memorial Day Special Edition of the Gold Miners News," May 31, 1937.
32. See references to Col. Henry Sanborn and "The American Citizen" in Bean, California, 497. See also Cletus E. Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farm Workers, 1870-1941* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 162-166.
33. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, February 27, 1938.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *The Miners Voice*, February 19, 1938.
36. Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 769-772.
37. *Nevada City Nugget*, April 8, 1938.
38. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 6, 1938; *Nevada City Nugget*, April 8, 1938.
39. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 7 and 8, 1938.
40. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 6-12, 1938; *Nevada City Nugget*, April 8, 1938.
41. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 8 and 20, 1938.
42. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 13, 1938, p. 10; Bramkamp, "International Union," 46-47.
43. Selvin, *Place in the Sun*, 42; Mike Quin, *The Big Strike* (Olema, California: Olema Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 73-80, 179.
44. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 6 and 8, 1938, *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 10, 1938, p. 13.
45. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 12, 19, 21, 1938; Bramkamp, "International Union," 46-47.
46. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 15, 1938; Bramkamp "International Union," 49.
47. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 13, 1938, p. 13; *Grass Valley Morning Union*, May 19, 1938.
48. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 19, 26, April 10, 1938; *The Miners Voice*, February 5, 1938.
49. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, January 20, 1938.
50. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, June 5, 11, 1938; *Sacramento Bee*, January 21, 1938; *Miners Voice*, February 26, 1938.
51. *Grass Valley Morning Union*, April 14, 1938.
52. Bramkamp, "International Union," p. 23.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Undated mimeograph sheet issued by "The Refugee Men, Women and Children of Nevada County" as a petition to Governor Frank Merriam; *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 12, 1938.
55. Interview with former Empire mine mill worker, Virgil Angove, August 14, 1978.



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*Robert M. Senkewicz, S.J.* This book is a new interpretation of the largest vigilante movement in American history—the San Francisco Vigilance Committee of 1856, who hanged four men and forced scores of others to flee the city. Rather than being a spontaneous response to political corruption and unbridled crime, the movement is shown to have its roots in the souring after 1852 of a once-booming business climate. The author chronicles the efforts of businessmen and merchants to improve their lot, first through regular politics and then through vigilante justice. He argues that the merchants saw agitation and violence against San Francisco's powerful Irish Catholics as their last-ditch attempt to unite and take control of the city. Illustrated. \$24.95



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BACKCOVER: *Riverboating on the twisting Upper Sacramento required riverboatmen to unload cargo at whatever hour their shallow-draft vessels steamed up to a dock. National Maritime Museum at San Francisco*





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## California Snapshots



ABOVE: Baseball as a spectator sport has not always belonged to men. This Sonora team drew a good audience in the 1890s.

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COVER: Canneries employed large numbers of women for short seasons to process a succession of crops as each ripened. Here, workers in a San Jose plant can olives.

Photographer: Putnam and Valentine, Los Angeles.

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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# CANNERY R·O·W

The AFL, the IWW, and  
Bay Area Italian Cannery Workers

by Elizabeth Reis



At the height of the canning season in late July 1917, hundreds of Italian workers did not report to their jobs at several San Francisco Bay Area fruit and vegetable canneries. Just four months after the United States had entered World War I, the production of canned foods had become a vital part of the war effort, and the industry was expanding its production to meet the needs of soldiers in the field. The strike was a protest against low wages and long hours and an effort to secure recognition for the cannery workers' recently formed union, the Toilers of the World. As the workers mounted picket lines and demonstrations at their own and neighboring canneries—the first such episode in the history of the California canning industry—the federal government reacted with alarm, calling out

troops and charging that the strike was an act of sabotage masterminded by the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). One government official claimed that it was "perhaps the most acute situation" the Federal Food Administration had encountered in gearing up for the war effort.<sup>1</sup> Volunteer crews of housewives and students moved to keep the canneries going, while men joined "pickhandle brigades" to frighten the strikers back to work.

The main drama was over in a week as arbitration replaced picket-line confrontations and most of the workers returned to their jobs. But the strike had exposed significant tensions between radical and conservative forces in the San Francisco labor movement as well as parallel strains between militancy and respectability within the Italian community. The tension in the labor movement centered on the conflict between the radical IWW, committed to organizing the entire working class into "one big union" under a revolutionary program, and the more conservative, craft-oriented American Federation of Labor (AFL), which had only marginal interest in unskilled workers. Al-

*Peeling and cutting peaches in a pre-conveyor-belt Sunnyvale cannery. The men at the ends of the tables carry fruit for the women cutters.*



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though the Toilers of the World was a federally chartered AFL union of unskilled workers, the strong presence of the IWW in San Francisco makes it likely that the IWW was also involved. While no individual names have survived to link the Toilers directly to the IWW, the name of the cannery workers union certainly hints at IWW influence. Moreover, AFL support of the strike was little more than token, and the AFL cooperated in an arbitration process which ultimately undermined its own union.

Similarly, the Italian press expressed contradictory aspirations in the ambiguous support it gave the striking workers. The press wanted them to be seen as patriotic members of the working class, simply demanding higher wages, shorter hours, and better conditions. The press also wanted the cannery workers to win the respect of Labor and to shake off the stigma of docility often attributed to Italian workers. But to do so, they had to take actions which could discredit their reputation as loyal and patriotic Americans. Sensitive to accusations of disloyalty, the press would not encourage the workers' strike unequivocally.

Elizabeth Reis received her Master's Degree in American History from Brown University in 1981 and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley.

The American-Italian Historical Association awarded this paper the 1984 Leonard Covello prize for the year's best paper on Italian Americans.

Historians have frequently characterized Italians in the American labor movement as either "padrone slaves" or "primitive rebels,"<sup>2</sup> depicting them as unorganizable, docile strikebreakers or as politically naive radicals, and their reputation in the San Francisco labor movement was similarly dubious. Employed primarily in agriculture, fishing, and mining, the Italians did not appear to contribute to the emerging city-wide union campaigns. In fact, of course, they have been both strikebreakers and radicals.<sup>3</sup> For the workers, the choice between the two was never so straightforward. In the Bay Area, indeed, the struggles between the IWW and the AFL complicated their alternatives.

World War I heightened these tensions. To the patriotic American public, little could be more dishonorable than striking during a time of war, particularly in an industry that was essential to the war effort. Association with the IWW, prosecuted during the war for sedition and disloyalty, was extremely damaging to the image the Italian press sought to portray. The press wanted the workers to think of themselves as patriotic members of the working class, simply demanding higher wages, shorter working hours, and better working conditions. Struggling to be seen as conscientious workers in the eyes of labor, the Italians had to take actions which would discredit their reputation as loyal and patriotic Americans. The workers were in a bind. The canning strike revealed the conflicts between radicalism and conservatism in the San Francisco labor movement in general and in the Italian community in particular.



America's entrance into the war meant more business for the canning industry as the United States increased shipments of food and munitions to the Allies. In 1917 American canners expected to produce nearly two billion cans of fruits and vegetables, of which the government and the Allies would require at least 200 million.<sup>4</sup> In 1918 the Del Monte Company management employees' magazine published a poem entitled "The Tin Can in War":

*We can march without shoes,  
We can fight without guns,  
We can fly without wings  
To flap over the Huns.  
We can sing without bands,  
Parade without banners,  
But no modern army  
Can eat without canners.<sup>5</sup>*

The expanding industry needed markets as much as the armies needed canned foods. Already, in 1914 a manufacturer of canned goods had touted his product in terms that would have seemed quite appropriate in the spring of 1917:

*The world could not dispense with canned foods and live; for without them progress would be halted, effort hobbled, if not extinguished, navies dismantled, armies dispersed, the great progress of the world stayed and thrown back upon itself shattered. Deprived of canned foods, all nations would fall into greater depths of depravity than heretofore known.<sup>6</sup>*

By 1916 the leading California canning corporations had consolidated to form the California Packing Corporation, or Del Monte, in a merger





## WAR RAGES in FRANCE

*They cannot  
fight & raise  
food at the  
same time*

**WE  
MUST  
FEED  
THEM**

*Denying our-  
selves only a  
little means  
Life to them*



**United States Food Administration**

*The striking cannery workers had to contend with public opinion influenced by propaganda which equated wasting food with aiding the enemy.*

of the four corporations that dominated the market and controlled most of the canning industry in the state. By far the largest contributor

to the merger was the California Fruit Cannery Association (CFCA), a canning syndicate owned by Marc Fontana, an Italian immigrant. CFCA had dominated the market since the 1890s and at the time of the merger owned thirty of the forty-two canneries in California.<sup>7</sup> By 1913 CFCA operated the world's largest

cannery with an annual capacity of twenty-four million cans, one-seventh of the state's total output.<sup>8</sup> All of the Fontana canneries were located in the San Francisco area. The Santa Clara Valley provided the produce while the North Beach Italian neighborhoods in San Francisco and similar Italian communities in San Jose and Oakland supplied the labor. In total, the four separate canning organizations included seventy-one canneries and fruit packing plants throughout California, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii.<sup>9</sup>

Several factors contributed to the consolidation of the canning industry at the turn of the century. Only an extremely large scale enterprise could afford to incorporate the technological changes in the processes of production and distribution which were becoming necessary to remain competitive. The Del Monte merger typified the emerging modern American business enterprise, requiring among other things a professional managerial hierarchy and coordination of the decision-making processes.<sup>10</sup> Before the merger each canning plant had its own management, its own processing equipment, and its own variety of product grades and sizes. The consolidation of all seventy-one plants was an enormous task, entailing an actual merger of all the administrative and marketing functions in one building under the Del Monte brand label.

In 1917 the corporation launched its first major national advertising campaign to take advantage of the new market for consumer and household goods that catered to homemakers. The corporation advertised its products as the finest fruits, "famous for their goodness





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*Drying was a seldom discussed alternative for fruits destined for canneries. These peaches were photographed in a Santa Clara Valley dry yard.*

and purity . . . packed on the very day they are picked, in clean, sunlit canneries." One full-page color advertisement in leading women's magazines and the *Saturday Evening Post* assured consumers that if they ever visited one of the Del Monte canneries they would marvel at "the rigid system of inspection which guards every detail of the work." Never again would women have to "put up" their own fruit or vegetables when it was so easy to have the golden sunshine of California brought right to the dining table.<sup>11</sup>

If American homemakers had taken Del Monte up on the invitation

to visit the "clean sunlit canneries," they would have been shocked. In 1890 a Bureau of Labor Statistics report asserted that "The effluvia arising from the drains and waste vegetable matter is not inducive to the health of the employees."<sup>12</sup> In 1913 the Labor Bureau reported that adequate ventilation, lighting, draining, and toilet facilities were sorely lacking in most of the canneries. The workrooms were humid because of the steam from the cooking process, and the floors were often made of an absorbent material that soaked up the excess water and fruit and vegetable juice. The toilet and washrooms were neither ventilated properly nor closed off from the workroom, and the general area in which the preparation of the food took place was filthy.<sup>13</sup>

The health and safety conditions in the canneries were no better in the 1920s. Before receiving his Ph.D. degree in 1928, historian Donald Anthony spent eight years working in canneries in the Santa Clara Valley. He reported that bandaged hands were a common characteristic of women cannery workers and that infections and blood poisoning were frequent.<sup>14</sup> In 1929 the situation had not changed significantly. One woman worker in an Oakland cannery reported:

*The work in the canneries on the Pacific Coast is hard to learn and is hard work. The hands of the workers are stained and from holding the knife, the fingers blister and the workers' palms get raw. The fruit acid eats right into the sores . . . Many of the time slips of the knife cut the hands*



*very severely. But we must stand it in order to make a living.*<sup>15</sup>

And in 1937 the cannery workers were still struggling to improve their conditions. One protesting worker complained, "The first thing you notice is how wet you get—and stay—from the waist both ways. I changed my shoes every day and still didn't have a dry pair on my feet for three months."<sup>16</sup>

Women cannery workers experienced these poor conditions most acutely because of the nature of the gender-specific tasks. On the "women's side" the workers peeled, cored, and cut the product. The men carried heavy boxes of fruit to and from the women's work tables and inspected the produce for defects. Donald Anthony's description of the preparation of cherries illustrates the general process of cannery work. First, the cutters removed the cherry stems and sorted the different types of cherries by placing them in boxes laid out in front of them. Then they had to wait for a male checker to replace a full box of fruit with an empty one. Since the women were paid on a piece-rate for each box stemmed, their wages were a function both of their own speed and efficiency and of the efficiency of the male checker. Anthony reported that the male checker often had too many stations to handle or was uninterested in performing the task properly, forcing the women to sit idle and lose money while waiting for work to be brought to them.

Once the cherries were stemmed and inspected, the male checkers brought them to the canning tables, where other women placed them in the proper cans. The mechanics of this step depended on whether or not the cannery was automated. In

the old-fashioned canneries the women graded the cherries by hand. In automated canneries the cherries were placed on an automatic grader that sorted the cherries according to size and fed them down a chute to the appropriate can. In either case, the women were responsible for getting the fruit into the correct cans and affixing the proper grade labels. This task was also on the piece-rate system, and again the women were dependent upon a steady supply of work brought to them by the male carriers.

Peaches, pears, tomatoes, and other fruits were processed in much the same way, although some fruits were more difficult to prepare and can than others. Peaches, particularly cling peaches, required special attention, because the cutters had to extract the pit while preserving the shape of the fruit.<sup>17</sup> Del Monte standards meant that consumers could count on consistent quality. The consumer should never know that peaches, pears, or apricots came any way other than sliced, pitted, cooked, and canned.

Most of the cannery workers during the peak seasons were women. In 1912 the Bureau of Labor Statistics compiled data on the California canning seasons in each district. Ten establishments were surveyed in the San Francisco Bay Area. At the beginning of the season, the last week of March, there were 190 employees of whom 152 were women. At the height of the season, the last week in July, there were 3,480 workers, and 2,363 of them were women.<sup>18</sup> Surviving photographs suggest that many of the women were over thirty-five years old, but otherwise the records do not indicate such things as whether they were gener-

ally married or single or whether they held other jobs during the off season.

In the city canneries, which ran a slightly longer term than the rural ones, the season ran from eighteen to thirty-four weeks. Most of the women did not work for the entire duration. Turnover was high, with new recruits constantly available, at least in the cities. After three weeks at a job a woman was considered an experienced worker and entitled to a raise of three cents an hour—from thirteen to sixteen cents—if she was paid by the day. However, the average span of work in the city canneries was only 7.7 weeks. Twenty percent of the women stayed at their jobs less than a week, and forty percent worked less than four weeks in a season.<sup>19</sup>



City cannery workers in California straddled a line between factory workers and agricultural laborers. They resembled agricultural workers because their work was seasonal, but like factory workers, they were non-migratory and usually worked in urban areas. Because of their uncertain status, labor organizers were slow to approach them. The AFL had made a half-hearted effort to organize farmworkers between 1909 and 1916, but lack of funds and interest had condemned the campaign to failure. Even this modest attempt had been motivated by a desire to blunt the IWW's successful drive among agricultural workers, and it had not extended to the cannery workers. Not only were the cannery workers seasonal and un-

skilled, but most of them were women, and the AFL discouraged the organization of women, insisting that a woman's primary function rested in the home. In 1905 an AFL official exclaimed, "The great principle for which we fight is opposed to taking . . . the women from their homes to put them in the factory and the sweatshop."<sup>20</sup> The AFL's aversion to women in the paid labor force derived largely from the pragmatic realization that they might supplant unionized male workers.

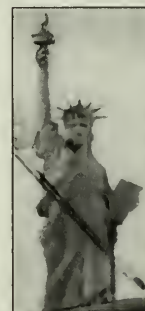
Industry representatives recognized the benefits of female labor, however. Cannery executives perceived the Italian women workers as passive and uncomplaining. One cannery worker remarked that "cannery bosses are claiming that the young girls make the best workers because they have the courage not to complain much of the sore hands."<sup>21</sup> According to Anthony, it was generally assumed that "most of the workers . . . being of the typical casual laborer type, are not themselves particularly interested in either their future in the canning industry or their future in life. They live in the present, or in their dreams of the future not in any way connected with the canning industry."<sup>22</sup> The industry's image of the typical cannery worker mirrored the AFL's attitude toward agricultural workers in general. Unable to develop their own sense of collectivity, cannery workers would have to rely on government legislation rather than trade unionism for protection.

In 1913 the Industrial Welfare Commission (IWC) created by the California Commission of Immigration and Housing (CCIH) attempted to establish uniform standards of wages, hours, and working condi-

tions in all California canneries. California's progressive reformers originally conceived of the CCIH as a social welfare agency to improve the economic position and aid the social assimilation of the state's immigrants. After the Wheatland Riot in 1913 called attention to the exploitation of migratory labor in the state's agricultural sector, Governor Hiram Johnson expanded the IWC's initial mandate to include a statewide campaign to improve working conditions in the agricultural labor camps. The Commission recommended but did not require minimum standards to which most farm employers agreed, perhaps to head off further uprisings. Such voluntary compliance was precisely what the Commission's progressive leadership wanted; its members believed that mutual understanding between employers and workers would make trade unionism unnecessary.<sup>23</sup> Growing out of CCIH's reformist impulses and its aversion to trade unionism, the IWC sought to improve labor relations in the canning industry to make canning "one of the most desirable occupations for women."<sup>24</sup>

From 1916 to 1920 the IWC embarked on a program to elevate canning conditions to "American" standards.<sup>25</sup> Working closely with cannery owners, the Commission established a series of minimum wage standards for women which significantly improved their earning power. Since over ninety percent of the women worked on the piece-rate system, the IWC raised the minimum rate a few cents per box. In addition, canneries were required to conform to Commission rulings on specific improvements in the work environment.<sup>26</sup>

The Industrial Welfare Commission worked in conjunction with the industry, and by taking the struggles between labor and management to the state bureaucracy, it hindered the development of trade unionism. The Commission's work made it easier for the AFL to ignore the demands of women workers because this state organization was already the "legitimate" voice of the women workers.<sup>27</sup>



While the AFL relied on state legislation to replace trade unionism among agricultural workers, the Industrial Workers of the World was ready to organize these workers and to address their economic and political needs. Founded in 1905 by groups of industrial workers who had left the craft-controlled AFL, the IWW reached its peak in California between 1910 and 1924. Its largest local was in San Francisco, and it devoted the majority of its efforts to free speech issues and to the problems of agricultural workers in the state.<sup>28</sup> Unlike the AFL, the IWW eagerly organized women workers, asserting that women "cannot be driven back to the home . . . They are a part of the army of labor . . . [We must] organize them with the men, just as they work with the men."<sup>29</sup>

By the end of 1916, the IWW's Agricultural Workers' Organization had 20,000 members, and total IWW membership had risen from 500 in 1910 to 5,000 in the spring of 1916 to 70,000 at its peak in 1917.<sup>30</sup> This dramatic increase in numbers, accompanied by a powerful image of



# ITALIANI!

Una grande battaglia si sta combattendo a Lawrence, Massach., da 25,000 lavoratori, fra cui moltissimi italiani.

**Lunedì 19 Corr., alle ore 8 p.m.**

NELLA

## Jefferson Square Hall

925 GOLDEN GATE AVE.

si terra' un GRANDE COMIZIO  
INTERNAZIONALE nel quale,  
fra gli altri oratori, parlera' anche  
il compagno

# Edmondo ROSSONI

il noto propagandista italiano.

Intervenite in massa.

**Viva la solidarieta' del proletariato internazionale!**

**Il Branch Latino I. W. W.**

1660 Stockton St.



*IWW activity among Bay Area immigrant groups is evidenced by this 1912 flier calling on Italians to support striking Lawrence, Massachusetts textile workers.*

the IWW as a revolutionary and dangerous group, was a result of the 1913 Wheatland Riot in which 2,800 workers protested horrendous liv-

ing conditions at a hops ranch in the Sacramento Valley. Many of the rioters were card-carrying Wobblies, although estimates of the actual number vary considerably. Federal troops were called in, strikers arrested, and some convicted of murder. Radical coalitions in California rallied to raise money for the strik-

ers, and the IWW's militancy won growing support for industrial unionism from the Left in the state.<sup>31</sup>



Given the influence of the IWW in California, it is hard to imagine that the Wobblies were not in some way involved in the organization of the cannery workers' union. Yet in the spring of 1917, it was the AFL that granted a charter to the Federal Labor Union, also known as the Toilers of the World, headquartered in San Jose. By July of that year the union boasted 1,000 members. But "federal" unions—groups of workers unrelated by skill—had little power and received little support in the AFL.<sup>32</sup> There was constant tension between the state AFL officials and the Toilers' leadership, perhaps reflecting suspicion within the conservative AFL that the radical IWW was involved. Indeed, the Toilers echoed the IWW's all-inclusive policies, recruiting male and female unskilled workers sixteen years or older, and the union proclaimed itself "willing to assist any working class movement regardless of race or creed."<sup>33</sup>

The canning and field fruit workers began meeting in March 1917, organizing primarily to address economic issues. The cost of living skyrocketed after the United States entered the war, rising over twenty percent from 1916 to 1917.<sup>34</sup> The Italian women workers complained of the increased price of basic necessities, particularly macaroni and olives.<sup>35</sup> A union representative claimed that some cannery owners were cutting wages below the stan-



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*Sores and skin irritation were common complaints among cannery workers who cut and peeled fruit by hand. Like others, this San Jose cannery had no way to keep the floor clean.*

dards set by the Industrial Welfare Commission, and the workers believed that their pay was not commensurate with the enormous profits that the cannery owners were receiving as a result of the increased war production.<sup>36</sup>

On May 6, 1917, 1,000 workers, mostly Italian men and women, participated in a mass meeting. Following a parade to the meeting hall, the workers were addressed by local clergy, a representative of the Italian Benevolent Society, the business agent for the union, and the local

attorney for the AFL. The speakers at the meeting outlined the strategies for the union. The Toilers would try to gain union recognition first and then discuss wages and hours, demanding a twenty-five percent wage increase. For the men this meant an increase from 25 cents to 31¼ cents per hour, or \$2.50 per eight-hour day. The women's demands were not specified.<sup>37</sup> Wage rates for both organized and unorganized workers were increasing in most industries as a result of wartime inflation, and most unions were able to secure pay increases without striking.<sup>38</sup> But some of the canning companies refused even to negotiate with the Toilers, much less recognize the union, claiming that the Industrial Workers of the World was involved.



During the busiest season of the year the Toilers decided to strike this crucial wartime industry. On Monday, July 23, 1917, 600 workers at the California Fruit Canner's Association in San Jose set up pickets surrounding the cannery. On the same day 175 men and 125 women walked off their jobs at the Bisceglia Brothers cannery in San Jose. Both companies were forced to close and several hundred sympathizers joined the strikers outside the plants. At the Bisceglia plant a striker was shot and wounded as he tried to prevent a car from driving up to the plant. At the Pratt-Low cannery in Santa Clara, where over



900 workers went out on strike, an incident between a foreman and the strikers left one striker dead and two others wounded.<sup>39</sup>

The next day workers at the Di Fiore Company went out on strike, joined in sympathy by the Kartschoke-Peterson brickyard employees. Two days later, on July 26, approximately 450 workers at several San Francisco canneries struck in support of the San Jose strikers. Later that day, 150 workers, 50 of them women, traveled to the Griffin-Skelley plant in Oakland to urge the workers to join them in the strike. The Oakland police met them at the train station and sent them all back to San Francisco. A day later the workers made a second attempt and managed to arrive at the cannery before police rounded most of them up and brought them back to the ferry landing. Some of them succeeded in creating a blockade around the cannery and, amidst cheers from their fellow workers, the women scrambled over the fence that enclosed the cannery cookroom.<sup>40</sup>

The San Jose *Mercury Herald* described the militancy of the women workers:

*Yesterday, some 50 Italian girls and women riding in autos from the west side of the city, stopped at 7th and Jackson at 6:30 A.M. and made a concerted rush for the doors of the Central California Canning Plant. They discovered the plant locked and started away on a run for the Golden Gate Company's plant, three blocks away. A dozen patrolmen . . . started in pursuit. The crowd of women took to the railroad tracks of the Niles line to make a short cut to the plant. They were immediately hemmed in by the police . . .*

*The majority of the women were armed*

*with cutting knives and, as soon as they realized the possibility of arrest, began throwing them in ditches. After the women threw the knives away, a patrol wagon was sent for. At the sight of it, the prisoners tried to break past the patrolmen. The rout became a panic . . . The women were threatened with arrest as they congregated around the plants again.*<sup>41</sup>

Both of the Bay Area Italian newspapers covered the strike in San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose extensively. *L'Italia* and *La Voce del Popolo* (The Voice of the People) supported the strikers and encouraged them to continue the strike until they received their demands. Yet they tempered their exhortations with advice to remain calm and non-violent, urging the workers not to be carried away by their emotions. The political differences between the two major Italian newspapers had long been an indication of the internal divisions within the Italian community. The older of the two papers, *La Voce del Popolo*, generally supported labor and the Democratic party, whereas the more conservative paper, *L'Italia*, represented local business leadership. However, when the Italians became the victims of nativist prejudice and immigration restriction, even *L'Italia* came to their defense.<sup>42</sup> Both newspapers sent mixed messages to their Italian readers. They advocated their participation in the strike, but worried about their reputation as respectable Americans.

The press praised the working-class consciousness exhibited in the conflict, yet tried to guide the workers cautiously in a more moderate direction. The labor-oriented paper, *La Voce del Popolo*, was impressed by the solidarity of the workers. One

article remarked, "Very few times have crowds of people all been in unison on an issue with all the simplicity and brotherhood . . . their souls have been raised to a perfect unity and an ineffable serenity."<sup>43</sup> The editors thanked the workers for their determination, reflecting that their solidarity was nothing but the "faithful mirror of their misery." They urged them to persevere and sacrifice to attain victory for themselves and the entire working-class, "Calloused hands have the right to well-being and happiness since the capitalists live in luxury and abundance, squeezing the strength of their muscles."<sup>44</sup>

Although it warned the strikers of possible repercussions from unpopular actions, *L'Italia* supported "their legal strike for the improvement of working conditions."<sup>45</sup> The editors of this paper were convinced that the strikers could not fail to elicit the support and sympathy of the public if they remembered that they were striking for decent conditions and nothing more. The editors urged the Italians to prove their seriousness and discipline by "avoiding nasty demonstrations that only result in discrediting the working class."<sup>46</sup>

The Italian press had reacted similarly on other occasions when Italians were involved in labor struggles. In 1903 Italian miners from the Western Federation of Miners joined with non-union sympathizers to demand an eight-hour day and union recognition. *L'Italia* urged the Italian workers to cooperate with their American brothers to attain their demands. The Italians were to be involved but not to be too committed and certainly not to assume leadership positions. The editors feared

the vindictive wrath of employers years down the line. In the lumber industry in 1909, Italians took collective action in what the editor of *L'Italia* termed a "justified" strike. He wrote, "That demonstration made it clear to the big jobbers in this country that Italians know how to feel personal and national dignity; that they are no longer a flock of sheep . . . but that they know how to be treated, finally as human beings equal to their brothers of other nationalities."<sup>47</sup>



The government responded immediately to the canning strike. The day after it began, on July 24, federal troops from nearby Camp Fremont reached San Jose. One hundred Coast Artillery men serving as infantry went into the Pratt-

Low cannery in Santa Clara prepared to take action against what was described in local papers as rioting and mob demonstrations. The message from the Santa Clara county officials to the War Board urged the temporary location of federal troops in San Jose to "protect the food industry from violent intimidation by agitators and large groups of disaffected migratory labor . . . [They] assemble in large numbers and by threats and violence intimidate women workers in food packing plants."<sup>48</sup> The editor of *La Voce del Popolo* expressed outrage at the government's overreaction, pointing out that San Francisco had had industrial fights "a hundred times more difficult than this" which had been solved without the intervention of federal troops.<sup>49</sup>

Many middle-class Americans shared the government's alarm. The cannery owners gathered San Jose Rotary Club members, prominent doctors, lawyers and businessmen; posses of citizens were formed and ninety Home Guards were trained. This vigilante activity was neither unique nor spontaneous. Local organizations such as the Liberty League, Knights of Liberty, the Boy Spies of America, and the Sedition Slammers appeared in every Western community where there was labor conflict, particularly where there was IWW involvement. These groups frequently took the law into their own hands to suppress "war-time disloyalty."<sup>50</sup> The federal troops left after two days, but the employers joined with community members to form a pickhandle brigade which went to the factories to intimidate the striking workers. One worker submitted the following poem satirizing this action to the Oakland socialist newspaper:

*They are men both strong and valiant;  
They are trusted, tried and true;  
They are guarding our fair city;  
They are shielding me and you  
From these terrorizing strikers—  
On strike; though overpaid—  
Who would kill us all, if it were not for  
"The Pick-handle Brigade."<sup>51</sup>*

The government made an effort to suppress information about the strike, fearing the disruption would spread to other industries throughout California. Officials were determined to keep the strike activities quiet. A telegram from Attorney General Thomas Gregory to the Executive Officer of the California Commission of Immigration and Housing stated that the Department would do its best to see that no pub-

licity was given to the strike. A coded telegram to the director of the CCIH from the head of the Industrial Welfare Commission pleaded, "Whatever you do, don't hold a public hearing down there."<sup>52</sup>

In a telegram to President Wilson, the Canner's League of California suggested that the conflict might be more than a simple controversy over wages:

*This is not a strike but a conspiracy to stop fruit and vegetable packing resulting in destruction to large quantities of food products necessary for use for our army and navy, our allies and the country at large. Imperative that the National Government take action to control this desperate movement of the enemies of our country which is sweeping over many Western States.<sup>53</sup>*

In the canning executives' nightmare, the "enemy" was an IWW-German alliance.

The Italian press vigorously denied that there was any IWW influence in the strike. *L'Italia* asserted that charges from the government that the Germans were using the IWW to manipulate the workers were merely a ploy to avoid confronting the demands of the strikers. Fearing a link between the radical IWW and the cannery workers that might discredit the strike, the press maintained that the Italians only wanted the best relationship between workers and capitalists.<sup>54</sup>

Cannery owners also worried that fruit under government contract for war supplies would spoil, although both the Italian press and the San Jose *Mercury Herald* reported that there was no real danger to the fruit crop. If the strike had continued, some of the fruit that was not canned could have been dried. In addition,





## FOOD WILL WIN THE WAR

You came here seeking Freedom  
You must now help to preserve it

**WHEAT** is needed for the allies  
Waste nothing



UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

*Propaganda singling out immigrants implied that they might not support the war effort on their own.*

some of the canners affected by the strike owned other canneries in the Bay Area, and others had connections to different plants as a result

of the recent merger, making it possible to transfer fruit.<sup>55</sup> These alternatives were not discussed, however, during mediation of the strike.

The Italian press supported mediation, contending that arbitration was the "American" way, as long as it "adjust[s] things in the best possible way for the good of the work-

ing-class." But the press was not concerned only with working-class interests. *La Voce del Popolo* conceded, "Maybe the workers acted too fast, and not in the way they were supposed to act, yet their behavior after the strike has been correct and not threatening."<sup>56</sup> The desire to be seen as respectable American citizens was equally important.

Four days after the strike began, Harrison Weinstock, state market inspector, and Ralph Merritt of the Food Control Department directed by Herbert Hoover met at the Labor Temple in San Jose to begin arbitration. These representatives were joined by AFL officials and the leadership of the Toilers. All of the discussions were translated into Italian. A general meeting of the union membership at the Labor Temple followed. Merritt urged the workers to go back to work if there was fruit to be processed and assured them that the arbitration council would settle the differences as soon as possible. Angry workers rose to leave the meeting while the AFL official threatened to expel the Toilers from the AFL if the strikers did not listen to the mediators, again indicating the marginal support provided by the AFL for the Toilers' cause. (*L'Italia* reported that the AFL speaker did not speak Italian and no one translated his speech.)<sup>57</sup> Speaker after speaker was interrupted with catcalls and hisses from the audience. The workers did not intend to go back to work until they were assured that their demands would be met. According to the *San Francisco Examiner*, 500 of the 1,000 Italians present ran from the building shouting at the top of their voices that they were being betrayed into the hands of the capitalists. They voted



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Workers labeled olive jars in this San Jose cannery just the way they labeled preserves in their own kitchens.

to continue the strike, although many workers did go to work the next day, while mediators, labor leaders, and lawyers met to discuss the situation.<sup>58</sup>

Both Italian papers accused the English-speaking press of conspiring with the cannery owners in reporting that the strike had ended before the strikers had decided to return to work. Rumors to this effect were simply used to intimidate the workers, they claimed, and should be ignored. In a letter to the editor of *La Voce del Popolo*, one cannery worker wrote, "It doesn't matter what the cannery officials say. Their

goal is to create discord among the workers to better subjugate them. But the workers know very well this trick and they know well what these people are trying to get at."<sup>59</sup>

If the cannery officials and the government were indeed setting out to create discord among the workers, the issue of patriotism became a convenient tool. One of the strike mediators, Ralph Merritt, referred to as the "dictator of food supply" by *L'Italia*, made the following speech to the workers during the strike:

*What the government wants you to do and what the government is interested in is that you listen to us as we are the representatives of the poor people of the United States and it is they who are going to be affected by this strike. Also, if the fruit is not packed, we are going to lose the war and if you do not want*

*it said that the Italians of California lost the war you must listen to us and not ask what is right.*<sup>60</sup>

Articles in the San Francisco and San Jose papers exploited the patriotism question in a more subtle manner. Rather than malign the "unpatriotic" activities of the Italian strikers, they repeatedly glorified the efforts of those who helped out in various ways during the strike. When the workers were still out on strike, middle-class women in the area took some steps to save the fruit crop. One article described the bravery of women from the Oakland Defense Unit, who "risked their lives and led 100 housewives to work in the canneries." The article claimed that the Italian women workers—who had been frightened by IWW threats but



were back at work already—were relieved to see such acts of patriotism and heroism. The middle-class women gave “confidence and a feeling of security to the workers.”<sup>61</sup> Students from the University of California also took time off from their schoolwork to go into the canneries for a few days to prevent any fruit that was under government contract from spoiling.

Patriotism became an advantageous tool to pit the “loyal” middle class against the “suspect” Italian workers. Sensitive to accusations of “un-Americanism,” the Italians became the victims of a psychological

Elizabeth Reis’s article on the Italian cannery workers is the 1985 winner of the California Historical Society’s Alice J. Clark Essay Contest. Established in 1982 by friends of Ms. Clark, the contest awards an annual prize of \$200 for the best original essay on the history of the San Francisco Bay Area and its people in the twentieth century. Authors must be no older than forty-five.

Ms. Clark took a lifelong interest in young people and financially assisted their educational and cultural enrichment. A native San Franciscan, she was fascinated by the city’s history, particularly its ferry boats and cable cars.

Friends of Ms. Clark who contributed to this year’s prize are: Ms. Maridell Anderson, Mrs. Jean Blair, Ms. Marie Conroy, Mr. Brian B. McGrath, Ms. Elizabeth Owen, and Dr. Thomas Wolff.

The annual deadline for submission of manuscript essays to the contest is December 31.

weapon meant to discourage working class solidarity. Women of Alameda County advocated a plan to set up distribution centers in Oakland where women could buy the fruit to can at home. The San Francisco *Labor Clarion*, the official organ of the AFL San Francisco Labor Council, showing little sympathy for the efforts of the Toilers, made one of its few references to the strike by supporting the home canning drive as a patriotic wartime undertaking. It even suggested that each neighborhood arrange “canning bees.”<sup>62</sup>

*La Voce del Popolo* responded to this strike-breaking activity with reports that the women and students were not taking the work seriously and were unconscious of the fact that they were taking jobs away from workers who needed them. Similarly, the *Tri-City Labor Review* of the Alameda Labor Council satirically called the middle-class women “saviors of our apricots” who “scabbed for the miserable half-starved crew of striking women in the canneries.”<sup>63</sup> Oakland’s socialist newspaper exclaimed that the “society women” had no shame and decried “these women who have all the luxuries of life, working for those who really need to make the money.” The newspaper suggested that if these women wanted to help they should look into the conditions of the canneries and “expose the dirty deal the workers get in these scab holes of California.”<sup>64</sup>

By July 31 the mediation team had reached an agreement with eleven canning companies in and around San Jose. On behalf of the Toilers, the AFL agreed to represent only the male workers.<sup>65</sup> Although the evidence is inconclusive, it appears that the Toilers made this concession in

order to stay within the AFL. The Toilers agreed that the men would be paid no less than 30 cents an hour up to January 1, 1918. The women workers would be represented by the Industrial Welfare Commission, an informal member of the mediation process which the AFL accepted as their “legitimate” voice. The Commission raised the hourly rate from 16 cents to 17½ cents, and the piece-rate scale was raised a few cents per box. The companies agreed to abide by the decisions until the first of the year, and the workers agreed to work without striking for that period. In addition, all strikers were to be reemployed without discrimination. However, the employers did not recognize the Toilers of the World. They feared that union recognition would lead to annual negotiations and further labor trouble.<sup>66</sup>



It is not possible to understand the 1917 strike and its aftermath without examining both the influence of the radical IWW and the fear it engendered. It would have been tactically inconceivable for the Toilers to acknowledge any IWW involvement in their union. Likewise, it is understandable that the Italian press, striving to promote a respectable image for the Italians, continually stressed the absence of the IWW from the Toilers’ rank and file. Despite these consistent denials, federal investigators and secret service agents employed by the large corporations initiated a probe of IWW activities in California, Oregon, and Washington immediately

after the strike's conclusion. By mid-1917 the government was harassing and prosecuting IWW members in every Western state for treason in aiding and abetting the enemy.

At this point, we can only speculate how much the IWW was actually involved with the Toilers, but the fear was real, and the Toilers lost support as a viable labor union because of it. The San Francisco *Labor Clarion* never reported the chartering of the Toilers of the World and reported—briefly—on the strike only after it was over. On the other hand, the Alameda Labor Council paper covered the Toilers and the strike extensively. The Toilers had successfully penetrated the canning industry in the Bay Area and Santa Clara County, so the paper's attention to their activities is not surprising. What is unusual is the *Clarion's* curious silence.

It is possible that the *Clarion* did not cover the cannery workers' strike because the Toilers was a federal union of unskilled workers. More likely, however, the *Clarion* was reluctant to report on a union that might have connections with what the *Clarion* editor called "the combination of mental defectives known as the Industrial Workers of the World." Referring to the formation of the United Railroad Workers union, the *Clarion* wrote, "The truth is, these persons with IWW proclivities never produce anything but trouble."<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps the AFL leaders in San Francisco thought that the rhetoric of the Toilers of the World resembled too closely the radical language of the IWW, particularly on the issue of labor's commitment to the war effort. Frequent editorials in the *Labor Clarion* pledged organized labor's

support for the war. "Labor has ever been true to democracy," began one editorial, "and has never faltered when the call came for sacrifices to preserve or promote free institutions." The author boldly insisted, "If the captains of industry and commerce will stand as loyally and unselfishly by their country as do the workers there will be no cause for complaint and a speedy and victorious war will be the result."<sup>68</sup>

The language of the Toilers was much stronger and less obsequious:

*[The cannery employer] who would deny his help a portion of his war profits is guilty of treason and should be so handled. The unprincipled operators of trade and stock exchanges, who dealing in foodstuffs have gambled, robbed and speculated, are the real traitors to the government and should be given short life, as aiders and abettors of the enemy.*<sup>69</sup>

Decrying the inequity of profits and advocating profit distribution must have sounded too close to IWW philosophy.



AFL leaders were not alone in their desire to dissociate trade unionism from IWW radicalism. The state bureaucracy, embodied in the California Commission of Immigration and Housing, was equally interested, albeit for different reasons. The Commission believed that IWW radicalism was eroding the potentially harmonious agricultural labor relations upon which their anti-union strategy rested. The IWW represented, according to Commission member Carleton Parker, "an

unfortunately valuable symptom of a diseased industrialism."<sup>70</sup> In order to uncover the extent of IWW influence among the agricultural workers, the Commission began covert investigation of IWW operations in 1914, which continued until the end of World War I.

J. Vance Thompson, a secret investigator employed by the Commission, wrote regular, detailed reports on Bay Area labor activities, including the canning industry. Because he was paid to find evidence of IWW activity, his reports should be treated with circumspection. In May 1919 Thompson reported that a "well-organized insidious propaganda" was being spread among all agricultural and migratory workers. Supplying detailed evidence of the involvement of specific IWW members, Thompson argued that "their peculiar psychology of destruction furnishes effective avenues for successful operation by those designing to hamper the efforts of our government for efficiency."<sup>71</sup>

Thompson followed the meetings of the Toilers of the World and the strike very closely. It is likely that his reports to the Commission encouraged its attempts to keep the conflict unpublicized. In one report on IWW activities in the Bay Area, he wrote that the IWW thrived on press publicity, "the more adverse, the more useful to their ends." According to Thompson, publicity only rallied sympathy for martyrdom and should be avoided at all costs. "New idols and new issues," he wrote, "are essential to the continuous success of the movement." He specifically suggested that to stop the spread of "noisy radical propaganda it will be necessary to eliminate the food upon which the movement



BERGER AND CARTER COMPANY  
*Owners of PACIFIC TOOL & SUPPLY CO.*

## Peeling Tables

"Wescott"



FIG. 538

### Description

Standard Jeffrey Wescott Peeling Table built in sizes to accommodate 40 to 100 peelers. The construction is entirely of metal, well balanced and braced to withstand severe strains and overload.

The table is reversible, operating in either direction. All parts are well protected, consequently there is no danger of accidents.

All receptacles for fruit and peelings are supported by skeleton frames and can be removed and stacked when washing the table. Each peeling compartment is separate, eliminating trouble with employees. All peeled fruit can be inspected thoroughly and operators paid accordingly. All peeling can be inspected readily and operators deducted for wasting good fruit.



FIG. 540

Peeling Table with Auxiliary Carriers

Where extra conveyor is required, this type of table is recommended.

### Equipment

No.	Code	No. of Peelers	Floor Space	Shipping Weight, lbs.	List Factory	List San Francisco
40	Strafo	40	14'6" x 24'5"	6,200	\$975 00	\$1125 00
56	Strafp	56	14'6" x 34'	6,800	1194 00	1275 00
60	Strafr	60	14'6" x 46'	7,200	1140 00	1320 00
80	Strafs	80	14'6" x 48'5"	8,300	1320 00	1525 00
100	Straft	90	14'6" x 58'	9,200	1500 00	1725 00

Price includes self-contained drive frame with countershafts and reversing clutches.

Prices and Discounts on Application  
 Specify by figure and number

ing store houses, barns, and fields. He also learned of the more subtle methods of destruction, such as filling a boiler with water in the winter and waiting for the frost to cause an explosion. According to this spy, not only were the Wobblies in San Francisco opposed to the U.S. involvement in the war and outspoken in their sympathies for the Kaiser, they were sabotaging the war effort by destroying crops and transportation facilities and, as the cannery strike revealed, curtailing food supplies.<sup>73</sup>

Thompson admitted, however, that the presence of a strong AFL in San Francisco severely hindered IWW activity. He wrote, "The IWW complain bitterly against the friction between themselves and the AFL unionists, admitting that the strength of the latter around San Francisco hampers the activities of the Wobblies; they being kept too busy fighting the AFL to pay much attention to the Sab Cat (sabotage)."<sup>74</sup> According to Thompson, the IWW tried to persuade the cannery workers to leave the Toilers of the World and join the IWW by charging, "The AFL loses for you by selling you out. The IWW will win for you because we oppose the boss and demand full product of our toil." Circulars had been ordered, he reported, which would show the cannery workers "how their strike was sold just when they had the industry crippled, and victory in sight." The circulars were to be distributed in conjunction with IWW efforts to create dissatisfaction or partial stoppage at the plants and perhaps to agitate for another strike before the prune crop came in. Thompson credited the IWW for the success of the cannery strike and be-

Only large canneries could invest in new equipment like this conveyor table advertised in a 1917 tool catalog.

thrives; namely, press publicity and the creation of martyrs."<sup>72</sup>

Thompson feared IWW sabotage and likened the situation in the Bay Area to a "dormant volcano." He be-

lieved that the Italians were particularly susceptible to IWW influence because "the majority of cannery workers are illiterate and frequently subject to ruthless exploitation." He elucidated the system of sabotage, known in IWW language as "wearing of the wooden shoe," and described in detail methods for burn-



Offices of La Voce del Popolo at the corner of today's Columbus Avenue and Kearny Street in 1905.

lieved that "the Wobs had made the situation in San Jose impossible of being handled by any AFL official."<sup>75</sup>

In the end, Thompson did not provide a conclusive answer to the question of whether the IWW was

involved in the Toilers. He maintained that when the cannery workers did not leave the Toilers as the IWW urged, the IWW then urged its own members to join the AFL in their respective crafts, including canning, and to get themselves elected as delegates and to official positions. Thompson buttressed his argument by claiming that efforts to destroy the California fruit crop

were widespread and threatening and that the sabotage was "AFL in name, Wobbler in action."<sup>76</sup> Moving into the AFL would have been a major departure from IWW policy, which had always been to have nothing to do with the AFL and to repudiate the "boring from within" strategy.<sup>77</sup> If Thompson's report was true, it no doubt reflected serious differences within the IWW which came in response to the mass wartime hysteria aimed directly at crushing the organization. But however internal divisions may have weakened the IWW, they only contributed to its demise. Although the Wobblies in California tried repeatedly to revive their organizing campaign among agricultural workers, federal repression rid the state of all IWW activists, making questions of organizing strategy moot.

The Toilers of the World did not last much longer. In 1918 the union called another strike over wages and hours in an Oakland cannery, but it ended quickly, arbitrated by the same mediation team that had ended the 1917 strike. The Toilers left the AFL in 1918 but continued to push for \$3.50 for an eight-hour day. A year later the union, now known as the Fruit Workers Union, returned to the AFL, which then tried to organize all the local unions in California under the name of the Fruit and Vegetable Workers Union. That union gave up its charter in 1922 when agricultural prices declined sharply and its organization crumbled. In 1920 Governor Hiram Johnson ordered the Industrial Welfare Commission to set wage rates for the entire fruit and vegetable industry. It adjusted grievances throughout the state in cooperation with the cannery owners and without the inter-

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ference of trade unionists. The canners were pleased with this arrangement and complied with the Commission's rulings throughout the 1920s.<sup>74</sup>

Following the Industrial Welfare Commission's lead, the canning companies tried to appease the workers in order to avoid further labor unrest. After the merger of California's four leading canneries, the new Del Monte Corporation was as interested in presenting the image of one unified national brand to its employees as it was to the consumer. Eager to develop harmonious labor relations, Del Monte tried to create a sense of family, camaraderie, and devotion to a larger entity.

In 1918 a committee of management employees began publishing a monthly periodical financed by the corporation and entitled *Del Monte Activities*. Written by and for middle management, the magazine reported the social activities of each department, usually rumors of romances between floors, and the scores of company baseball games. The workers in the canning plants were rarely mentioned. In one issue, however, the editors printed a poem written by "a young lady whose thoughts . . . though she is busy selecting quality fruits for Del Monte consumers, turn to the patriotic aspect of the work":

Merrily we work along  
work along  
work along  
In the cannery.  
The fruit we can is Del Monte  
Del Monte  
Del Monte  
The best brand in the land.<sup>75</sup>

In 1919 the editors of the *Del Monte*

*Activities* announced the addition of *The Lug Box*, a newspaper intended to tie the "home office" with the "outside employees." The majority of the articles were in English, and since some reports suggest that most of the Italian workers read only Italian, it is likely that they never even read the paper. There was, however, one section translated into Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, designed to convey a message about workers' roles in the plant. One article explained, "Irrespective of what your work may be, yours is the most important work in the plant. If you do not do your own work carefully and thoroughly, you are a weak link in the chain."<sup>80</sup> Another article that might well have been titled, "From Stockboy to Superintendent," outlined "steady but sure progress" in the career of one Italian cannery worker. His promotions over the years exemplified, according to *The Lug Box*, the truth that:

*The heights by great men reached and kept  
Are not attained by sudden flight;  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upwards through the night.*<sup>81</sup>

The lessons were clear: work hard, and maybe one day you will be promoted to foreman of the plant. The paper explained that to work at Del Monte meant more than just having a job. Workers were to think of themselves as part of a much larger organization, dedicated to the common cause of packing the world's finest fruits and vegetables.

The development of labor relations within the canning industry and the program of protective labor legislation initiated by the state filled the gap left by the demise of the trade unionists and the IWW. In the 1920s welfare capitalism replaced

collective economic and political action. It was not until the crisis of the 1930s that worker militancy and the radical leadership of the communists, built upon the ruins of the IWW insurgency, altered the state's agricultural sector, and led to the organization of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union.

But in 1917, the cannery workers had no such powerful and committed leadership. The AFL was unwilling to organize and support agricultural and unskilled workers wholeheartedly. It was reluctant to organize women. And it was leery of the Toilers' possible association with IWW radicalism. In the eyes of the AFL, the Toilers of the World was a renegade union. The IWW, in contrast, was eager to organize unskilled agricultural workers and made a special effort to organize women. Yet the Toilers were not willing to give their full allegiance to the IWW.

The Italian cannery workers were caught in the middle of a labor movement riven with conflict. Aggravating their situation was the need to assert their class interests and yet gain respect as patriotic Americans. The Italian press expressed this tension, supporting the strike and the workers' class consciousness, but always with ambivalence. The Italians were torn both between two different tendencies in the American labor movement and between their own conflicting desires. □

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(See notes beginning on p. 241.)

# MAKING HER FAME

Charlotte Perkins Gilman  
in California

by Gary Scharnhorst



Charlotte Perkins Gilman is best known today as a theorist of feminism and the author of *Women and Economics*, which a reviewer for the *Nation* hailed upon its publication in 1898 as "the most significant utterance on the subject [of sexual oppression] since [John Stuart] Mill's *Subjection of Women*."<sup>1</sup> More recently, historian Carl Degler concluded in 1956 that "If . . . America in the last fifty years has basically altered its attitude toward the working woman, then Charlotte Perkins Gilman must be assigned a significant part in the accomplishment of that change."<sup>2</sup> Yet, like her aunt Harriet Beecher Stowe, she often deprecated the term "feminist," believing it too narrow to encompass the range of her social criticism. Women suffrage was too immediate and limited a goal, she thought, and sexual license was uncivilized and genetically irresponsible. "My business," she declared in her autobiography, "was to find out

what ailed society and how most easily and naturally to improve it."<sup>3</sup>

Gilman formulated the social critique with which she diagnosed "what ailed society" and the reform program "to improve it" while living in California and serving an apprenticeship as a propagandist for Nationalism during the 1890s. Nationalism was the social reform movement inspired by *Looking Backward*, Edward Bellamy's utopian romance published in 1888 which contrasted the class conflict and cutthroat competition endemic to Gilded Age America with the socialism of the twenty-first century. In Bellamy's utopia, all industries have been nationalized, all citizens enjoy economic and sexual equality, and the changes have occurred gradually without recourse to the armed revolution Marx had predicted. In particular, Bellamy described an advanced civilization which guaranteed full rights to women. Although the women in his story are but sentimentalized helpmeets, they are economically independent and free

of the burden of household chores in a society in which all domestic services, including washing and cooking, have been socialized.

Within a few weeks of the publication of *Looking Backward*, Nationalist Clubs had sprouted in major cities throughout the country. In May 1889, a monthly magazine entitled the *Nationalist* was launched in Boston under official auspices. Although it suspended publication in April 1891 for financial reasons, Bellamy had already launched a successor journal, the weekly Boston *New Nation*, in January 1891.<sup>4</sup>



From the beginning, Nationalism thrived in the fertile soil of California, even more than in its native New England. By the summer of 1889, twenty-three clubs were forming in the state. An organ of the movement, the *California Nationalist*, began to appear in February 1890 and was soon followed by the *Weekly*



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(Top) Charlotte Perkins  
Stetson in 1890.

Directors of the Women's Congress Association  
in 1895. Stetson, with her hand on the chair,  
played a key role in convening 2000 women to  
discuss reform issues.

*Nationalist* and the conversion to Nationalist principles of the *Pacific Monthly*. By May 1890, over a hundred clubs existed nationwide, with forty-seven of them in California. During the next month, sixteen more clubs were founded across the country, over half of them in California. By November, the highwater mark of the movement, 158 clubs were chartered in all, sixty-five of them in California.<sup>5</sup> As Gilman later recalled, "California is a state peculiarly addicted to swift enthusiasms. . . . In 1890 the countryside was deeply stirred by Bellamy's *Looking Backward*."<sup>6</sup> In April, 1891, two Nationalist candidates for Congress polled 1.25 percent of the total votes cast in California.<sup>7</sup>

The movement successfully recruited many women to its ranks during these months by promising the abolition of sex-slavery. With the advent of the "new nation," as one feminist member explained, women in marital partnerships would no longer be economically subservient to men. Thus every woman ought to join the movement because "Nationalism breaks the strongest fetter which binds woman, viz., her marital dependence on man, and makes her his helpmeet as an equal and

independent partner, accomplishing by economic enfranchisement what political enfranchisement alone could but partially do."<sup>8</sup> The movement soon floundered, however, especially in the wake of its alliance with the ill-fated People's Party in the 1892 elections. The Panic of 1893 and the depression which followed eroded much of its remaining membership. In retrospect, Nationalism often seems little more than a flurry of parlor socialism, an agitation akin to the single-tax movement or, perhaps, a thin chapter in the lives of such prominent supporters as W.D. Howells, Edward Everett Hale, and Daniel De Leon. Yet it provided Gilman with her first public forum and launched an illustrious career.

Charlotte Perkins Stetson, as she was known then, slipped into the orbit of Nationalism almost accidentally. Her parents had separated a few years after her birth in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1860. Raised by her mother in genteel poverty, she married the artist Walter Stetson in 1884, bore a daughter in 1885, suffered a severe bout with neurasthenia in 1886-87, and separated from Stetson and moved across the country to Pasadena to pursue a literary career in 1888. She was, in 1890, a poor but economically independent single parent. She had read *Looking Backward* soon after its publication, to judge from her correspondence. "I grant that Bellamy has no style. I wonder if John the Baptist had," she wrote an old friend from Providence. "Is it possible that you see nothing in that book but its poor execution?"<sup>9</sup> Though intrigued by Bellamy's doctrines, she was not affiliated with the movement his romance inspired until "one of the editorial board" of

the *Nationalist*,<sup>10</sup> probably her uncle Edward Hale, solicited a contribution from her. On March 1, 1890 according to her manuscript log,<sup>11</sup> she submitted a lyric entitled "Similar Cases" to the magazine. Upon its publication in the April issue, the poem was hailed as a minor classic of satirical verse.

In the poem, Stetson burlesqued social conservatism in the accents of a reform Darwinist. First, a prehistoric Eohippus declares his intention to become a horse; next, an ape his intention to become a man. In both cases, critics ridicule their hopes with the refrain "You'd have to change your nature!" In the final stanza, Stetson's rhetoric rises an octave:<sup>12</sup>

*There was once a Neolithic Man, an  
enterprising wight,  
Who made his simple implements  
unusually bright.  
Unusually clever he, unusually  
brave,  
And he sketched delightful mammoths  
on the borders of his cave.  
To his Neolithic neighbors, who were  
startled and surprised,  
Said he: "My friends, in course of  
time, we shall be civilized!  
We are going to live in cities and build  
churches and make laws!  
We are going to eat three times a day  
without the natural cause!  
We're going to turn life upside-down  
about a thing called gold!  
We're going to want the earth and  
take as much as we can hold!  
We're going to wear a pile of stuff  
outside our proper skins;  
We're going to have Diseases! and  
Accomplishments!! and Sins!!!"  
Then they all rose up in fury against  
their boastful friend;  
For prehistoric patience comes*

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## By the end of 1890 "Similar Cases" had made Stetson famous in reformist literary circles on both coasts.

quickly to an end.  
Said one: "This is chimerical!  
Utopian! Absurd!"  
Said another: "What a stupid life!  
Too dull, upon my word!"  
Cried all: "Before such things can  
come, you idiotic child,  
You must alter Human Nature!"  
and they all sat back and smiled.  
Thought they: "An answer to that  
last it will be hard to find."  
It was a clinching argument—to the  
Neolithic Mind!

The poem won Stetson immediate celebrity. Over the next several weeks she would publish two short pieces in the *California Nationalist*,<sup>13</sup> another in the *Weekly Nationalist*,<sup>14</sup> six more pieces in the *Pacific Monthly*,<sup>15</sup> and she would submit three more poems to the *Nationalist* in Boston.<sup>16</sup> "Similar Cases" was the only genuine success among them, however. W.D. Howells, a charter member of the First Nationalist Club in Boston, wrote her on June 9 that "I've read [your poem in the April *Nationalist*] many times with unflagging joy. . . . We have nothing since the Biglow Papers half so good for a good cause as 'Similar Cases.'"<sup>17</sup> Stetson was frankly gratified by his note, and replied to Howells the day she received it that "there is not a man in America whose praise in literature I would rather win!"<sup>18</sup> Thirty years later, she echoed this comment in her autobiography and added that, bolstered by Howells' good opinion, "I felt like a real 'author' at last."<sup>19</sup> Edward Hale also congratulated his niece: The poem "is perfect," he wrote her on July 15, 1890. "If I told you all I say of it and all that other people say I should turn your head. The idea was an inspiration." He later told her he

thought the poem "a great campaign document."<sup>20</sup>



The *New England Magazine*, perhaps at Hale's behest, reprinted the poem with approbation;<sup>21</sup> Gertrude Franklin Atherton declared in the *Cosmopolitan* that "the humor [of the poem] is so sharp and the satire so keen that any member of that sex which claims humor as its special prerogative would be glad to have written it";<sup>22</sup> the *Nationalist* subsequently reprinted Atherton's comments in praise of the "young author who has rendered such service to the cause of nationalism."<sup>23</sup> Lester Ward, the so-called philosopher of the modern welfare state, pronounced it a "remarkable poem" and the "most telling answer that has ever been made" to conservative Darwinists.<sup>24</sup> No less a luminary than Ambrose Bierce, the "Prattler" of the *San Francisco Examiner*, thought "Similar Cases" a "delightful satire upon those of us who have not the happiness to think that the progress of humanity toward the light is subject to sudden and lasting acceleration."<sup>25</sup> In all, as Stetson concluded her diary for the year 1890, "My whole literary reputation dates . . . mainly from 'Similar Cases.'"<sup>26</sup>

The poem also launched Stetson's career as a public lecturer. One day in the spring of 1890, while on a bus near her home at the corner of Orange Grove Avenue and Arroyo Drive in Pasadena, she was invited by another passenger to speak before the local Nationalist Club. She recalled in her autobiography that "This was an entirely new proposition. I had never given a public address nor expected to. But here was

an opportunity, not wrong, and I accepted it."<sup>27</sup> On June 10, 1890, she completed the manuscript of her lecture, entitled "On Human Nature." On June 15, she delivered it twice with "great success" in the storefront meeting room of the Club, and later she repeated it, by invitation, before a private audience. "Edward Bellamy has not invented much. Few people do," she declared. "He has put in popular form the truths of ages, and done it at a time when the whole world was aching for such help."<sup>28</sup>

The next issue of the *Weekly Nationalist* praised Stetson's "admirable refutation of the constantly reiterated argument that nothing can be done until we alter human nature."<sup>29</sup> Her reputation as poet and lecturer preceding her, she delivered the same address on July 13 before the First Nationalist Club in Los Angeles to a "tumultuous" reception.<sup>30</sup> Harriet Howe, a feminist writer and member of the program committee at the Los Angeles club, recalled later that "the audience began to interrupt her with frequent applause, their puzzlement at first no doubt being due to hearing valuable ideas from a woman, a woman who had something to say and knew how to say it devoid of all platitudes."<sup>31</sup> The lecture was so popular in Los Angeles that within two weeks she rewrote part of it for publication in the *Weekly Nationalist* and for separate distribution as a Nationalist tract.<sup>32</sup>

Soon Stetson was lecturing on alternate Sundays at the Pasadena and Los Angeles clubs on such topics as "Nationalism and the Virtues," "Nationalism and Love," "Nationalism and Religion," and "Nationalism and the Arts," with occasional digressions on dress reform and social-



### **"The Survival of the Fittest"**

*New Nation*, 14 March 1891, p. 111.

*In northern zones the ranging bear  
Protects himself with fat and hair.  
Where snow is deep and ice is stark,  
And half the year is cold and dark,  
He still survives a clime like that  
By growing fur, by growing fat.  
These traits, O bear, which thou  
transmittest*

*Prove the survival of the fittest!*

*To polar regions waste and wan  
Comes the approaching race of man.  
A puny, feeble, little lubber—  
He has no fur, he has no blubber.  
The scornful bear sat down at ease  
To see the stranger starve and freeze;  
But lo! the stranger slew the bear,  
And ate his fat, and wore his hair!  
These deeds, O Man! which thou  
committest,*

*Prove the survival of the fittest!*

*In modern times the millionaire  
Protects himself as did the bear.  
Where Poverty and Hunger are,  
He counts his bullion by the car.  
Where thousands suffer, still he thrives,  
And after death his Will survives.  
The wealth, O Croesus! thou  
transmittest,*

*Proves the survival of the fittest!*

*But lo! some people, odd and funny,  
Some men without a cent of money,  
The simple, common Human Race,—  
Chose to improve their dwelling place!  
They had no use for Millionaires;  
They calmly said the world was theirs;  
They were so wise—so strong—so  
many—*

*The Millionaire?—There wasn't any!  
These deeds, O Man, which thou  
committest,*

*Prove the survival of the fittest!*

ized child care.<sup>33</sup> In her lecture "Why We Want Nationalism," she explicitly defined the goals of the movement: "[Nationalism] is a system of industrial organization by which the whole nation may obtain the greatest wealth with the least exertion," she announced, "and by which the whole nation may equally share in the common necessities of life." All means of production should be nationalized and administered to provide for the general welfare. She even invoked the authority of her uncle to rationalize the goals of the movement: "As Edward Everett Hale truly says, Nationalism is but the American idea further carried out. Because we want health and freedom and all noble growth and improvement, because we want to see common sense in all departments of human life, because we want [t] Justice and absolute Rights—that is why we want Nationalism."<sup>34</sup>

"It was pleasant work," she would later reflect. "I had plenty to say and the Beecher faculty for saying it." She carefully noted in her diary the honoraria she collected for these lectures—usually only three to five dollars per date.<sup>35</sup>

In her appeals on behalf of Nationalism, Stetson discussed in rudimentary form many of the ideas she elaborated later in her career. In particular, Stetson used her Nationalist lectures to champion the economic independence of women, her most characteristic and recurrent theme. With the advent of the New Nation, she explained in 1892, "Women will be independent financially, not of each other, not of the race, but of this revolting condition of dependence upon the man with whom they hold the relation of marriage."<sup>36</sup> She took pains to assure her audience

that, though separated from her husband, she preached no doctrine of free love. "Monogamous marriage is our ideal, the perfect and lasting union of two happy human beings," she allowed in "Nationalism and Religion."<sup>37</sup> "I believe in permanent monogamous marriage as the present highest ideal of humanity," she added, with only a hint of equivocation, in another address.<sup>38</sup> The net effect of Nationalism, she concluded, would be to refine the marital institution and raise the standard of virtue, for women in the New Nation would be free to marry for love, not compelled to marry for survival or security. In the New Nation, for the first time in human history, sexual selection would be natural and instinctual, not skewed by base economic motives: "When women are no [longer forced] to maintain themselves by loving [men] in marriage or out—when a man [courts] as a possible lover, but not as 'a good [provider]'—when there is not a market on [women] and poverty steadily driving thousands [upon] thousands into that market—then they will be chaste."<sup>39</sup> Soon after joining the Nationalist lecture circuit in the summer of 1890, Stetson even helped organize a local Social Purity society in Pasadena which, by promoting traditional standards of sexual continence, was allied in her view with the larger Nationalist cause.<sup>40</sup>

Especially in 1891 and 1892, at the peak of Stetson's popularity as a Nationalist speaker, local newspapers as well as Bellamy's *New Nation* in Boston publicized her lectures in their pages. One address in Los Angeles was so well-received that a newspaper there lamented "that its



MRS.  
Charlotte Perkins Stetson  
—OF—

PASADENA,

WILL ADDRESS  
NATIONALIST CLUB NO. 1,  
Sunday, Jan. 25, 1891  
In Temperance Temple,

AT 2:30 P. M.

SUBJECT:

# NATIONALISM And the Arts.

No lecturer who has ever appeared before a Los Angeles audience is superior to Mrs. Stetson in wit, eloquence and logic.

COME and HEAR HER.  
ADMISSION FREE.  
ALL ARE WELCOME.

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Stetson's career as a lecturer began when a passenger on a bus invited her to address a Nationalist meeting.

(Below) As editor of the Pacific Coast Women's Press Association newspaper, Stetson claimed the right of women to address public issues from their own perspective.



## THE IMPRESS

A JOURNAL FOR MEN AND WOMEN  
SAN FRANCISCO, OCTOBER 20, 1894

SINGLE COPIES, TEN CENTS

### What We Are Doing

In Los Angeles a mass meeting was held to welcome the new Superintendent of Public Schools, P. W. Search, and the stage was occupied by the members of the Board of Education and many prominent women of the city who are interested in educational work.

Among the most vital movements of the day is that of wide deep reform in education, and among the most helpful signs

them—and she will not fail now. For generations Americans have groaned in almost hopeless shame over the degradation of our cities has made us a by-word among the nations. At last a

length precludes us from publishing it entire."<sup>41</sup> The *New Nation* praised her work and summarized her lectures on its "Club News" page no less than ten times between February 7 and June 6, 1891 with such encomiums as "very interesting" and "witty and very entertaining" punctuating the reports. The May 31 issue devoted two full paragraphs to her recent address on "Nationalism and the Arts" before the First Nationalist Club in Oakland, an audience which "crowded to its utmost capacity" the local Grand Army hall. The next week, she was described in the pages of the *New Nation* as one "of the ablest speakers in the movement."<sup>42</sup> When Edward Hale toured southern California in February and March of 1891 to lecture on Nationalism, she helped to arrange his itinerary and accompanied him on some of his stops, occasionally addressing the audiences in turn.<sup>43</sup>



In addition to her lecturework throughout the state, Stetson was active in her local Nationalist club. In September 1891, she moved with her daughter Katharine to Oakland to be near Adeline E. Knapp, a reporter for the *San Francisco Call*. They soon settled into a rented house at 1258 Webster, coincidentally across the street from the poet Ina Coolbrith. The Oakland club was moribund upon her arrival and, characteristically, Stetson set to work reviving it. Her first convert, in fact, was her friend Knapp. On October 18, a month after her arrival in the city, as she recorded in her diary, she had "a good talk with Delle on Nationalism." On November 6, she rehearsed a new Nation-

alism lecture, "What Life Might Be," before the local club and confided to her diary that "Delle is beginning to feel much roused on these questions." A week later, Stetson and Knapp attended a meeting to reorganize the local association, and on November 17 they spent "a happy evening over a constitution for the New Nationalist Club, or, as I have called it the New Nation Club." The next day, at a committee meeting, Knapp was figuratively baptized into the flock. "She is made one of us," Stetson concluded her diary that day.<sup>44</sup> The reorganized club boasted a membership of thirty-six by mid-December, and in early January, at its semi-annual business meeting, Stetson was elected corresponding secretary and Knapp librarian.<sup>45</sup> In its next issue, the *New Nation* duly reported that the club had been reorganized and that Stetson had been elected an officer, adding that she "is at present giving Sunday lectures which are thoroughly nationalistic in their tone."<sup>46</sup>

The club soon rented a "nice little hall" at 865 Broadway in Oakland, as Stetson noted in her diary, and held its first public meeting there in the evening of January 15, 1892. Stetson delivered a keynote address to the assembly entitled "What is Nationalism?" in which she outlined the immediate purposes of the group: "This club hopes to spread some knowledge of [Nationalism] both by these meetings and the dissemination of literature." The speech was "received with enthusiasm. Very successful indeed."<sup>47</sup> She also served as chair of the program committee, in which office she arranged for such speakers as the iconoclastic poet Edwin Markham, later the author of "The Man with

the Hoe," to address the club.<sup>48</sup> Years later, she recreated these events in a short tale, "Mrs. Potter and the Clay Club," in which the title character became the secretary of a disorganized group of local humanitarians "and did her work with steady accuracy." As Mrs. Potter "became more widely acquainted, she was put on the membership committee, a position most modestly accepted, but resulting in a most notable improvement in new members." She also helped "in the program work, cajoling speakers who did not want to speak, and repressing some who did." Mrs. Potter molded the organization until "a sense of peace and harmony suffused the resurrected club."<sup>49</sup> Unfortunately Stetson's art did not exactly imitate life. Her revival of the Oakland Nationalist club was not crowned with such unqualified success. Over the weeks, in fact, she betrayed irritation with several club members. She attempted to host a discussion at the hall on Sunday afternoon, January 31, for example, but "too many cranks" had appeared and she had been forced to "give it up."<sup>50</sup> However, Stetson faithfully attended most of the weekly Friday meetings in company with Knapp at least through the spring of 1892.

Meanwhile, Stetson had also earned a reputation as a poet of Nationalism. Edward Hale placed one of her poems, a burlesque of opposition to the movement entitled "An Anti-Nationalist Wail," in the *New England Magazine* for December 1890 ("Oh, dear!/The Christian virtues will disappear!/Nowhere on land or sea/Will be room for charity!").<sup>51</sup> Another of her Nationalist poems, "A Conservative," appeared in *Life*



## Stetson's agenda remained full of activities informed by Nationalist ideas for years after the formal movement dissolved.

and was subsequently reprinted in the *Outlook*.<sup>52</sup> When she submitted satirical verse entitled "The Survival of the Fittest" to the Boston *New Nation* in February 1891, she received a personal letter of acceptance from the editor, Edward Bellamy. The poem, Bellamy informed Stetson, had already been featured in a reading at the local Nationalist club and, in the wake of "Similar Cases," it had "quite made your fame hereabouts!" Bellamy added in closing that "anything you can send me will be most welcome."<sup>53</sup> The poem subsequently appeared in the March 14, 1891, issue of the *New Nation*.

As good as his word, Bellamy over a period of three years printed in the *New Nation* a total of ten poems from Stetson's pen.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, in the issue dated June 24, 1893, he referred to her as "the poet of nationalism so well known to our readers." Shortly after Stetson sent him a copy of her verse anthology *In This Our World* in November 1893, Bellamy thanked her for the inscription "which I should be glad to think it possible to deserve" and added that "I have already shown my high opinion of your poems on nationalism" by printing them in the magazine.<sup>55</sup> The earliest verse Stetson submitted to Bellamy was light and humorous. In "The Amoeboid Cell," for example, she dramatized a dialogue between a specialized cell, a component of a larger body which adapts to changing circumstances and survives, and a primitive amoeboid cell, an utter individualist who soon dies from exposure. The later lyrics Stetson contributed to the *New Nation* tend to be more unconventional, often written in free verse, and solemnly polemical, opening with such declarations as "The nation is the unit"

and "Free land is not enough." The last of these poems appeared in the January 6, 1884, issue—less than a month before Bellamy ceased publication of the magazine. As a regular contributor, Stetson predictably lamented its demise: "The *New Nation* is suspended, owing of course, to the pressure of this hardest of hard years," she remarked. "It is a pity, for never was a reform paper more clear, simple, logical, well-written and well sustained."<sup>56</sup>



For a variety of reasons, Stetson curtailed her agitation on behalf of Nationalism after 1892, but she remained loyal to the movement and its premises. Despite official protestations of sexual equality, most of the clubs observed an unofficial policy of discrimination. "The women in [the Los Angeles] Nationalist Club," Harriet Howe reminisced, "were treated with the usual condescension with which men treat women in all matters supposed to be over women's heads. The women tired of that treatment."<sup>57</sup> Also, by the end of 1892 Stetson had begun to quarrel with Adeline Knapp, who would eventually write an anti-suffrage tract. "My last love proves even as others," she closed her diary for the year. "Out of it all I ought surely to learn final detachment from all personal concerns."<sup>58</sup> Moreover, Stetson probably was displeased by public statements of Nationalist leaders asked to comment on reports of her impending divorce. According to the *Boston Globe*, Walter Stetson had accused his estranged wife "of devoting her time to the doctrines of Bellamy" and had dis-

paraged her "crank theories." The story was widely reprinted in mid-December 1892, especially in the Hearst chain of newspapers, though Walter Stetson vociferously denied the statements attributed to him by the *Globe*.<sup>59</sup> Both L.J. Bridgman, president of the First Nationalist Club in Boston, and Henry R. Legate, president of the Second Nationalist Club, hastened to disavow any association of their economic doctrines with liberal divorce. Bridgman told an interviewer for the *Boston Herald* the day after the story broke that "Neither Bellamy nor Nationalists generally have espoused loosening of marriage ties," and Legate bluntly asserted that "Nationalism has nothing to do with the subject of marriage."<sup>60</sup> Charlotte Perkins Stetson saved a clipping of the *Boston Herald* article among her papers.

Although by 1893–94 Stetson was filling her agenda with other reform activities, they were consistently informed by Nationalist ideas. On September 5, 1892, for example, she read a prize essay on the labor movement before the Alameda County Federation of Trades, an organization she subsequently joined. She forwarded a copy of the essay to the *New Nation*, whose editor thoroughly approved its Nationalistic sentiments and excerpted it in the June 24 and September 23, 1893, issues. "As the workers of humanity we hold the world in our hands," she concluded, "and can make it what we will. Forward, then, in the light of truth and the warmth of mutual love!"<sup>61</sup> Like other Nationalists, Stetson also campaigned on behalf of the People's Party, especially for candidates in Oakland who favored municipal control of local utilities.<sup>62</sup> She began to contribute

(Right) The "nice little hall" the Nationalists rented at 865 Broadway in Oakland was just beyond the left margin of this 1890 scene at Broadway and Ninth Street.

This bus, shown in 1890 in front of the First Presbyterian Church a few blocks from Stetson's Pasadena home, could have been the one she rode.



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Nationalist stories and essays to several local newspapers, such as a feature article on the twentieth-century woman printed in the *San Francisco Call* in April 1893.<sup>63</sup> By the winter of 1893 she was editing the *Impress*, the magazine of the Pacific Coast Women's Press Association, where she was soon joined by Helen Campbell, another Nationalist.

Stetson continued to advertise Nationalism in that journal. She had read W.D. Howell's *A Traveler from Altruria* and *Letters from an Altrurian Traveler*<sup>64</sup> and admired the Nationalist flavor of these tales of a visitor from an imaginary Christian commonwealth. She thought the romances wed "the power and grace of high literary art to the force of truth." Such stories as *Looking Backward* and *A Traveler from Altruria*, she observed in the *Impress*, "have the effect of making every day troubles seem like unbearable terrors."<sup>65</sup> In early January 1895 she published in the *Impress* a Bellamy-esque story, "A Cabinet Meeting," which purported to depict a Cabinet debate in the New Nation on the merits of universal education. In the next issue, she editorially honored Bellamy's "largeness of thought," his "daring imagination, the careful, practical planning of detail, and the immense human love" which marked his utopian scheme. "A man who can sway the thought of the age, as Mr. Bellamy has swayed it," she concluded, "is no mean author."<sup>66</sup> In another issue, she announced a forthcoming lecture in San Francisco by the socialist Laurence Gronlund, author of *The Cooperative Commonwealth* (1884), which, she noted, "is believed to have furnished much of the inspiration and the argument on which Bellamy founded his 'Looking Back-

ward' and Howells' his 'Traveller from Altruria.'"<sup>67</sup>



Even after she left California in the summer of 1895 to become an itinerant lecturer, Stetson paralleled and sometimes crossed Bellamy's path. They served together as contributing editors to the *American Fabian*, a socialist magazine, for several months beginning in December 1896, and Stetson spoke at a memorial service for Bellamy after his death in 1898.<sup>68</sup> In *Women and Economics* and *The Home* (1903), she betrayed the influence of Bellamy and the Nationalists George Duysters and John Pickering Putnam, though she did not mention them by name, by detailing the advantages of kitchenless homes grouped together and "connected by covered ways with [a common] eating-house."<sup>69</sup>

In later years, long after Nationalism became passé, remembered if at all as an intense but brief enthusiasm, the movement continued to influence the works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Gilman modeled her own utopian fiction upon *Looking Backward* and Howells' first Altrurian romance. In Bellamy's story, Julian West, resuscitated from his long slumber, had been struck by "the complete absence of chimneys and their smoke" in 21st-century Boston. Gilman, in turn, modeled the city in her utopian romance *Herland* (1915) upon Bellamy's Boston, with one peculiar twist: The lost civilization of "Herland" is inhabited entirely by women who reproduce parthenogenetically. But whereas Bellamy modeled his bucolic Boston of 2000 A.D. upon the

pre-industrial village he remembered from his boyhood, Gilman patterned her woman's utopia in part after the mother-centered family she knew as a child. Like Bellamy in *Looking Backward*, Gilman portrayed in *Herland* a colorless native of the workaday world unwittingly translated to a heaven on earth. In its sequel, *With Her in Ourland* (1916), she adopted the opposite premise, an innovation in the utopian formula modeled on Howells' *A Traveler from Altruria*: "We are shown the novel spectacle of an inhabitant of Arcadian lands transferred into the midst of our social confusion, suffering and unrest."<sup>70</sup>

Gilman continued to refer in print to Bellamy even after she retired from public life at age sixty-two. In 1923, in *His Religion and Hers*, she once more explicitly invoked Bellamy's name: Whereas most people are eager to believe in an other-worldly millennium or afterlife, she complained, people tend to ridicule and dismiss this-world utopias submitted for approval in blueprint by Plato, Bellamy, H.G. Wells, and others.<sup>71</sup> In her autobiography, published after her death in Pasadena in 1935 though mostly written in the mid-1920s, she reminisced about the heady days a generation before when, for nearly three years, she shared with other Nationalists a faith in the imminent realization of a utopian dream. Her enthusiasm had waned over the years, but she expressed no regrets. She had served with distinction in the front ranks of the Bellamyite campaign and, more than any other figure active in the movement, she had built a career espousing the Nationalist platform. □

(See notes beginning on p. 242.)



*Relations between ethnic groups create the underlying dynamic of California social history. In 1948 Minor White photographed the Fillmore district of San Francisco where newly arrived Blacks had found a niche in spaces vacated by Japanese removed for wartime internment. CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO*



# A USABLE HISTORY FOR A MULTICULTURAL STATE

by Charles Wollenberg

*To provide an opportunity for historians who speak on contemporary subjects to be heard beyond their immediate audiences, California History will from time to time publish speeches and other public comments which are judged to be of interest to our readers.*

*The following speech was given by Charles Wollenberg at a conference titled "History in the Public Schools: What Shall We Teach?" co-sponsored by the University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Education and the California State Department of Education under the auspices of the Clio Project. The conference, held on the Berkeley campus in August 1984, was attended by over 500 educators from all parts of California. It was one portion of the Clio Project's ongoing effort to bring*

*together university and public school educators to improve the teaching of history for California's K-12 students. We believe that Wollenberg's thoughts on history in the schools are applicable to the study and interpretation of California history in any context.*

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A wise observer once noted that California "is like the rest of the United States, only more so." Certainly, this is the case as far as the ethnic composition of the population is concerned. In the multiethnic, multinational, multicultural society of the United States, California is very much "more so." Minorities or Third World people—who make up twenty percent of the U.S. population—account for at least one-third of all Californians. This includes 5 million people of Latin-American origin, 1.8 million Blacks, 1.5 million Asians and Pacific Islanders, and 200 thousand Native Americans. Moreover, the minority numbers are increasing far more rapidly than the population as a whole. Between 1940 and 1980, the state's total population grew almost three-and-one-half times, but the number of Hispanics and Blacks increased more than ten-fold. Since the reforms in immigration law in 1965 and the provision for special treatment of Indochinese as refugees in the 1970s, the Asian population has also mushroomed. By the year 2000,

Asians will probably have passed Blacks to become California's second-largest minority group.<sup>1</sup>

More than a quarter of all legal foreign immigrants to the United States now come to California, and the great majority of the new arrivals are from Latin America and Asia. If undocumented aliens are included, California's percentage of the national total will be even higher. The Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay metropolitan areas have become for the late twentieth century what New York and Boston were for the late nineteenth: major entry points for a new wave of immigration that is changing the nature of American society. Foreign immigrants will account for a third or more of the state's total population growth between 1980 and the year 2000. Early in the twenty-first century California will probably become the nation's first mainland state with a majority of so-called minorities. To put it another way, there will be no majority group in California's population.<sup>2</sup>

That situation will occur even earlier in the state's



Neighborhoods shaped by past public transportation lines become part of the landscape in which this generation lives. Here a Los Angeles cable car leaves the Main Street Mill in San Francisco during the late 1880s.

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All ethnic groups participate in a legal system derived from Anglo-Saxon traditions. Here Chicanos demand a retrial for Juan Corona, a Chicano labor contractor accused of multiple murders.

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In a few decades, California will probably become the first mainland state with a majority of so-called minorities.

public schools. In the 1981-82 school year, over half of all kindergarten and first grade students in public schools were members of minority groups. In Los Angeles, by far the largest school district, non-Hispanic whites, who comprised fifty percent of the total student enrollment in 1970, accounted for only twenty-one percent in 1984. More than a quarter of the district's 556,000 students are enrolled in bilingual education programs.<sup>3</sup>

Given these numbers, educators trying to bring state and local history into the curriculum must confront the question: "What shall we teach?" The Education Code mandates the teaching of California History in the fourth grade and encourages its inclusion as part of the social science curriculum in secondary schools.<sup>4</sup> How, then, shall we teach the state's history so that it will help students better understand the dynamic society in which they live? Can we formulate an approach to the study of California's past that will yield a "usable" history for a multicultural state?

A usable history must consciously link past and present—not to impose contemporary values and viewpoints upon the past, but to help our students to understand the historical roots of present conditions. Such a history must be multicultural in that it accepts and respects the social and ethnic diversity of past and present California. A good social science curriculum must certainly teach both immigrant and non-immigrant students the origins and applications of American traditions, values, and constitutional and political principles. But in our concern over a new wave of immigration we must not revert to past "Americanization" curricula, with their uncritical "my country right or wrong" style of American nationalism and their adherence to a narrow, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant view of American culture which denigrates the heritages of ethnic and immigrant minorities. Only by understanding the multicultural nature of California's past can we hope to comprehend

the diversity of contemporary California society.

The romantic view of California history so often enshrined in the textbooks and popular literature of a generation ago is obviously inappropriate for our purposes. The happy pageant of docile Indians, kindly friars, and colorful Forty-Niners may entertain, but it certainly does not enlighten. At best it produces nostalgia, a pleasant emotion, but not the basis for good history. Dr. J.S. Holliday, executive director emeritus of the California Historical Society, calls nostalgia "the past without its pain."<sup>5</sup> Good history cannot avoid the pain of the past. Nostalgia also presupposes a separation between past and present making history a comfortable refuge from contemporary cares. We, on the other hand, seek a history which promotes understanding of present-day problems and conditions.

Influenced by Black and other Third-World liberation movements, many young historians began seriously investigating the role of minorities in California's past during the 1960s. Their findings were a welcome antidote to the Anglo emphasis of much of the state's earlier historiography, but some of the new studies did little more than show that particular ethnic groups were present at a certain time and place. Minorities were often portrayed only as victims or role models. While neither image is necessarily inaccurate, neither yields a complete picture of ethnic-group experience in California life. The emphasis on particular minorities also carried with it the danger that California history would become a series of individual, isolated histories with no unifying social synthesis. In short, as immensely valuable as the historical scholarship on California minorities that began in the 1960s has been, it has not yet created the usable, multicultural history that we seek.<sup>6</sup>

The very dynamism and diversity of California's social development makes historical synthesis difficult to achieve. Since 1849, there has probably never been a time when a majority of California residents were actually natives of the state. Rather, from the Gold Rush to the present, California society has been formed by



*The Gold Rush and subsequent Overland migration were transforming events for nineteenth century California. Artist F. O. C. Darley depicted "Emigrants Crossing the Plains" for D. Appleton and Co. of New York in 1869.*

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*World War II was not just a busy moment in California history. Its new jobs and industries transformed the state's economy and population.*

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The people of California may not have a common history, but the place called California certainly does—and migration itself is a shared experience for most of the state's ethnic groups.

a series of great, overlapping migrations. Lou Cannon, one of the most perceptive observers of the state's politics, has suggested that Ronald Reagan, rather than Richard Nixon, is the first true California president, in part because Reagan was not born here—unlike Nixon.<sup>7</sup> If Reagan, the transplanted midwesterner, is a "true" Californian, then in a profound sense, Californians as a people have no common history but many different histories brought from many different parts of the nation and the world.

James Houston has argued, however, that while the people of California may not have a common history, the place called California certainly does.<sup>8</sup> The natural environment has, of course, dramatically affected the pace of human development. Witness the continuing significance of water as a major political issue. But human institutions and economic and political systems are also parts of the place's common history. A Mexican farm worker arriving in the San Joaquin Valley becomes an integral part of the history of California agribusiness. An Asian family living in Oakland or Los Angeles resides in a neighborhood which exists at least in part because of the way past interurban rail systems and contemporary freeways were laid out. All Californians are touched by a political and legal system founded on Anglo-American concepts of government and justice, just as all are affected by the English language and its accompanying system of thought and culture.

All Californians are also influenced by the state's rather exaggerated version of American popular culture. Indeed, pop culture, the product of our mass-consumption capitalist economy, may be the strongest unifying force in American life. Much of that culture, from television and film to Levi's and Safeway, has a "Made in California" label. It was not surprising to learn as a result of a horrifying mass murder that a McDonald's restaurant was a major social center and gathering place in the largely Hispanic community of San Ysidro. Nor should we be surprised that a Los Angeles cafe which

features "kosher burritos" is owned by a Korean and has a Guatemalan cook. However dubious its value as a "real" culture of deeply held values, pop culture produces important common experiences, images, and elements of lifestyle shared by Californians of all ethnic and national origins.

Virtually all Californians are also united by the common heritage of migration itself. All of us, except those of California Indian background, are here because we or our forebears came from somewhere else. This, of course, is true for the United States as a whole, but in this case especially, California is like the rest of the nation, only more so. The relationships between different waves of migration and different national ethnic groups create the underlying dynamic of California's social history in a number of ways. Migration has not been only a movement toward a center of economic growth; it has also stimulated its own growth, creating new material and human needs and bringing new sources of labor, talent, and entrepreneurial ambition to the state. Race, national origin and class have always intersected in California, I would argue, to an even greater degree than in the nation as a whole. Much of the state's bitter heritage of racial oppression arises from struggles for power, wealth, and prestige between different groups. Thus the same ongoing migration which makes it so difficult to conceive of a common history for the people of California is, ironically, the unifying theme of the social history of the place called California.

From this perspective, many of the familiar events of California's past take on new meaning. The original Spanish-Mexican settlements, for example, become significant in a new way as the beginning of the area's multicultural heritage. The mission Indians, though a numerical majority, played the economic and social role of the state's first minority group. The Hispanic settle-



*Public education was on the books but by no means universal in California when I.W. Taber photographed these two San Francisco classes in 1890. Neither teacher would have had any idea what to do with the other's pupils.*

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World War II was to the 1940s, fifties and sixties what the Gold Rush was to the 1840s, fifties and sixties: an historical event of almost revolutionary proportions.

ments also began a migration north from Mexico, which, though periodically waxing and waning, has been a part of California life since 1769.

The Gold Rush, too, is often misunderstood. It, rather than the formal U.S. conquest in 1846, determined the nature of California's place in the American nation. It was also the state's first modern, multinational migration. While a majority of the new arrivals were from the settled parts of the United States, significant minorities came from Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific Islands. San Francisco, the ultimate Gold Rush metropolis, has been one of the nation's most ethnically and nationally diverse urban centers since 1849. Much of the city's political and social life has been shaped by the interplay of the various groups within the diverse population, a phenomenon particularly evident in the history of its often-powerful labor movement.

The completion of the transcontinental railroad is another key event needing reinterpretation. It dramatically broadened California's economic and social base, promoting agricultural development and settlement in the Central Valley. Even more important, railroad construction opened southern California to rapid growth, particularly attracting new arrivals from the Midwest and laborers from Mexico. Just as San Francisco was the center of nineteenth-century Chinese immigration, the new metropolis of Los Angeles became the heartland for early twentieth-century arrivals from Japan. Economic development based on oil, irrigated agriculture, tourism and movies combined with a multi-ethnic population and decentralized settlement pattern encouraged by electric rail systems to make Los Angeles the prototype "Sun Belt" city. In the automobile age, it was to be the model for the new Houstons, Dallases, and Phoenixes (not to mention San Diego and San Jose) that arose after World War II.

That war is still another event whose significance to California has been misunderstood if not ignored. In

fact, the war was to the 1940s, fifties, and sixties what the Gold Rush was to the 1840s, fifties, and sixties: an historical event of almost revolutionary proportions. World War II began a three-decade period of growth that produced the nation's most populous state and the world's seventh largest economy. The war laid the basis for California's aerospace and high-tech industrial economy, its massive higher education complex, and its dominant suburban lifestyle. Although the war produced the horror of Japanese relocation, it also brought the beginning of vast increases in Black and Hispanic populations and knocked many of the ideological props out of the racist value system that had been so much a part of pre-war California life. It is difficult to imagine the great protests and counterculture movements of the 1960s occurring as they did without the social, demographic, and economic changes set into motion by World War II.

Again, I would not claim that any of these post-war phenomena were uniquely Californian, but I would contend that in these areas, too, California was like the rest of the nation and the rest of western industrial society, only more so. It is precisely this broad perspective on California history, with its multiethnic emphasis and its common themes linking past, present, and future, that makes the subject so attractive for classroom use.<sup>9</sup> Through this kind of California history, students can learn a great deal about the nation and the world. They can also learn something about human diversity, the nature of prejudice and oppression, the need for social justice, and the value of democratic tolerance.

The history of the place called California is a resource to be cherished. It is one of the few things residents of this diverse and confusing place have in common. And it is a history that is not provincial; it can be understood as part of the broadest framework of human experience. A usable history for a multicultural state can in fact be an important part of a lesson plan for survival in a multicultural world. □ (See notes beginning on p. 243.)

# S P E A K I N G



*(Top) Twenty-year-old Wong Yow sat for his portrait in the year before he came to the United States. WONG YOW COLLECTION*


*Crates wait to be assembled at a grape shipping shed near Lodi around 1925. CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO*



# WHEN A HAIRCUT WAS A LUXURY

A Chinese Farm Laborer  
in the Sacramento Delta

by Peter C. Y. Leung



**T**he Chinese farm laborer is virtually extinct in today's American labor market. Yet only a century ago Chinese labor was as much in demand in California agriculture as it was in mining, railroad construction, land reclamation, fisheries, and light industry. In spite of the anti-Chinese movement and resultant exclusion laws, Chinese laborers played a crucial role in developing the Sacramento River Delta where they were employed in the construction of levees, in land reclamation, and in agriculture. These Chinese represent the last wave of Asian immigrants to arrive in the Delta, and their lives are an important segment of its history.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1980 and 1982 I interviewed twenty former farm laborers from Locke, a town built by Chinese in 1915 in the center of the Sacramento River Delta. Its remaining residents are possibly the last men able to document the Chinese involvement with the land. Among them, Wong Yow kept detailed rec-

ords of his life, which chronicle the experience of a generation. I interviewed Wong many times in many locations—even on a walk from Locke to Walnut Grove. When he returned to China in 1980, I was able to accompany him on a visit to his native home in Chungshan.

Wong's cheeks are not as full as they once were, and his frame is not as strong. His dark hair is thinning, and he squints a little. Wong is extremely friendly and courteous. He has confided that he can think of no better place to be than Locke. He walks to Walnut Grove daily Monday through Friday to have lunch with other elderly people. The walk is good for his heart and body, he says. He grows vegetables, which he shares with friends and neighbors at harvest time, and he is studying the Bible. Wong is an avid newspaper reader who likes to cut out special articles and proverbs to post on his walls or table. Friends from Sacramento sometimes visit him, and he says he cannot conceive of a better life at his age.

Wong Yow was born in 1900 as Wong Buck Sing in the village of Yeun Fung in the Chungshan district of Gwangdong province. There he spent the first twenty-one years of his life. His mother died when he was nine years old, leaving Wong to be raised by his aunts. The boy attended school for several years, at what he remembers to be a cost of only three Chinese dollars a year. He also worked at odd jobs requiring minimal skill, such as vegetable gardening. At eighteen he became an apprentice wood worker but he did not like the craft and left that position.

Like his father and grandfather before him, Wong's father had left China at the age of forty to find work in North America. He first went to Mexico, where entry was relatively unrestricted, but arranged to move to San Francisco after hearing from friends that work was more plentiful and wages higher in the United States. His entry was sponsored by Kim Kee, a company which was allowed to recruit Chinese workers from abroad. Eventually he hoped

to bring his son to the United States to join him.

Under the Exclusion Act, which suspended Chinese immigration from 1882 to 1943, unskilled Chinese laborers had to use ingenious strategies to enter. Producing witnesses to testify that one was a merchant, student, or tourist was one way of circumventing the ban.<sup>2</sup> Another, more widely used, was the "slot" system. Children sired by Chinese residents in the United States during visits to China could enter the United States unrestricted. Thus if a man claimed on returning to this country that he had begotten a child in China, he had in effect created a "slot" on his family tree which could be sold to someone in China who wanted to immigrate to the United States. For prospective immigrants this was an expensive proposition, but during the years of strictest exclusion it was often their only alternative.<sup>3</sup> The 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco helped further this type of enterprise, because all the pertinent records regarding immigrants and their status were destroyed, leaving officials with no choice but to accept the words of resident Chinese regarding the number of their children abroad.<sup>4</sup> The men who entered by claiming to be the son of someone with a slot were known as "paper sons."

Wong entered this country as a paper son. His real father paid a merchant \$1650 for a slot, and Wong was given a document identifying him as "Wong Yow," the merchant's son, and stating that he was entering the United States as a student. Wong was accompanied by another man who was his "paper brother." The port of entry for paper sons like Wong was Angel Island, where in-

coming Chinese were separated from immigrants of other race and nationality. Although others were processed fairly rapidly, Chinese were held for weeks, sometimes months, while their papers were checked and rechecked by immigration officials, who also demanded that they tell their stories again and again.

Wong arrived at Angel Island in 1921 on the ship *Nile* sailing from Hong Kong. He had only a small suitcase with a few clothes and a bucket he had used for shipboard bathing. He still has his ticket, dated August 15, 1921, and he remembers the number not only of his ticket but that of his paper brother as well. Wong also has a small booklet in which was recorded all the information he needed to establish his paper son identity, including such details as which of his aunts and neighbors had bound feet. Most immigrants who entered in this manner discarded the paper as soon as they had memorized it, since discovery would mean deportation. For some reason Wong took the risk of retaining his. Like the others, Wong spent many hours laboriously committing the details to memory. He recalls sneaking to private places, even bathrooms, in order to review his notes before interrogations.

Two memories of Angel Island stand out in Wong's mind. One is of the Chinese interpreter called Gwongtau Lou, "baldheaded man," whom everyone desperately feared because of his meanness. The other is a story he was told about two supposed brothers in camp. Ap-

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*This carefully posed photograph, which predates Wong Yow by about twenty years, illustrates the established role of Chinese farm laborers.*

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parently they had informed officials that a banquet had been held for them before their departure to the United States and that a chicken had been slaughtered for the feast. When an officer asked each brother individually what color the chicken's feathers had been, however, the younger answered yellow and the elder black. The authorities deported them for this discrepancy.

By the time of Wong's arrival on Angel Island, conditions were better than they had been. Everyone ate in a common dining hall, although men and women were housed in separate dormitories. Fighting and quarrelling among the Chinese were rare. A class was offered, which Wong attended, to learn English. At his interview, the interpreter was pleasant, and the officer asked him questions for about half an hour. Which room had he lived in in his home in China? Which room had his brother lived in? How had the furniture of the house been arranged? His answered matched those of his "brother," so his papers were approved. Once he had been examined by American physicians for diseases like hookworm, he was allowed to enter the country.

From Angel Island, Wong went to San Francisco where he was met by some people from his native village. His father could not meet him because of the tong wars in San Francisco's Chinatown. Wong then traveled to Locke on a night ship, a vessel referred to by the Chinese as "gwoji deng," or fruit ship.

When he first arrived in the Delta, Wong lived with his father in Walnut Grove. Founded in 1851 by John W. Sharp, the town had come to be dominated by the Chinese who settled there while working in the Delta. They worked on the levees, in the orchards, on farms, and in local canneries, as well as in Chinese restaurants, boarding houses, and shops. Some of the boarding houses still exist on the north end of town. The Chinese population of Walnut Grove was for the most part transient and represented two conflicting clans, the Chungshanese, to which Wong and his father belonged, and the Sze Yaps.<sup>5</sup> Eventually, the recurring animosity between the two groups caused the Chungshanese to move to Locke.<sup>6</sup> After Walnut Grove's Chinese district burned, first in 1915 and again in 1937, many Chinese left the town.<sup>7</sup>

Wong Yow recalls that in 1921 there were many boarding houses around Walnut Grove and that for fifty cents a meal one could also have a night's lodging. Monthly lodgers could postpone payment until they received their paychecks. For five

dollars a month, Wong and his father were given a small room with two beds and a place to cook. When they were working, they took their meals at the work site, but between jobs they gathered wood and cooked for themselves. Wong's father returned to China in 1924.

During their three years together, Wong's father worked for the King family in Courtland, while Wong took what work he could find in Walnut Grove, Courtland, and sometimes Lodi, where he went to harvest grapes. On one such trip to Lodi, Wong was recruited to harvest hops by a contracting firm named Gwong Sang Cheung. Wong and forty or fifty other workers were transported by car to a work camp set up on the grasslands. Gwong was only one of a number of Chinese contracting firms that operated such work camps for workers recruited from the Delta. Slough House and Biggs were two of the better known camp sites.





A typical crew ranged in age from eighteen to sixty-five. Most of the men were single, with little education, and with relatively few needs, so their life in the camps was one of simple pleasures and hard work to earn enough money simply to live.<sup>8</sup> Two shirts and two pairs of shoes a year were enough; they even cut each other's hair to save on expenses. For the men without families, however, saving money or sending it home to China were not high priorities, and some of them used their money for gambling. Some lost everything they earned.

With thirty to forty men in a work crew, it was necessary to have a full-time cook to prepare three meals a day. The workers cared more about the quality of their food than about how much they earned, at least until the 1940s, so a good cook was indispensable to a work camp. To maintain a good reputation, a contractor would replace a poor cook, immedi-

ately if necessary, and would never require the cook to limit rations. Meals cost fifteen cents each. The cook usually knew how to prepare such foods as lotus and pork soup, dried cabbage soup, and bitter melon with dried oyster soup—all part of the seasonal diet the workers had been accustomed to in China. Sweet egg or herb tea was sometimes served as a night snack. With little refrigeration, the contractor had to bring in food supplies by truck from the Delta several times a week—and the cook, who had no telephone to make special requests, had to cook what came. Fresh produce also had to be delivered regularly to the camp, since the workers stayed there for only two months which was too short a season for gardening. The contractor also brought old Chinese newspapers for those who wanted to read them and delivered whatever mail arrived in town for the workers.

The owner of the land usually provided the camp facilities, including tents sheltering up to ten persons in which the men slept on the ground. A shady place was used as the cookhouse, and food was stored here along with any of the workers' belongings which needed protection.

Though the work was hard and there was no formal entertainment, the workers found ways to amuse themselves in the evenings. Some read the newspapers or mail, while others preferred to gamble in their tents, playing dice, Chinese dominoes, and other Chinese games. Many liked to play games which did not involve money, such as Chinese chess. The Chinese flute, typically played without an accompanying singer, was a popular instrument in camp just as it was in China. Telling tales was another favorite pastime. There were always a few willing to sit around and listen to such favorites as "Chow Dynasty, Three Em-



(Far left) The two major groups of Chinese in the Delta specialized in working different crops. Onions were harvested by the Sze Yaps, while the Chongshanese tended other vegetables and fruits.

CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO

(Left) The main street of Locke, photographed here in 1976, has changed little in appearance since Wong Yow was new to the area, although there are fewer boarding houses now than there were then.

PETER LEUNG COLLECTION

(Right) Wong Yow's wedding photograph shows the relatives he called family. Wong is fourth from the left in the last row; his bride is in front of him.

WONG YOW COLLECTION



perors and Five Kingdoms," which recounted Chinese history and the exploits of traditional heroes. Ghost stories, especially those set in China, were also very popular, and were especially frightening when narrated at night in these remote camps. Conversation centered around their villages in China, for these men knew too little about the United States to discuss it. Some of the older workers relaxed in the evening by smoking opium before going to sleep. Although it was illegal, they handled it in a manner which made its use appear natural to their co-workers.

Workers in these camps were generally healthy and seldom sick. They worked hard, ate nourishing food, and got plenty of sleep. When they did encounter disease, they often treated it themselves with Chinese medicines and herbs. The cook sometimes assumed the role of a doctor by preparing something special for anyone who did not feel well. When a laborer was injured on the job, the contractor would take him immediately by truck to the nearest doctor.

Wong Yow worked in a camp harvesting hops for two years. Thereafter, he worked ten years for a man

on Sutter Island picking fruit, pruning trees, and irrigating land. During August and September, Wong went to Lodi to harvest grapes, returning to Sutter Island in October. From 1947 until his retirement in 1968, he worked at ranches near Locke, Courtland, and Walnut Grove. Wong and his fellow workers had little to do in the evenings. After washing his clothes and taking a shower, Wong usually went straight to bed, although he sometimes read newspapers. On Sundays his employers occasionally took the workers to Locke or Walnut Grove to shop or find entertainment. Wong recalls that going to town was very exciting for the workers, who sometimes simply sat on the sidewalk benches talking and watching people. Part of the enjoyment was the opportunity to see women. Some of the men liked to gamble, but Wong used these town visits to shop or have his hair cut. Occasionally, he went to the movies before the boss drove them back to the ranch.

Locke, which was founded by Chinese in 1915, was a busy town which offered pleasures not available on the isolated ranches in the Delta. Two Chinese tea houses, Jin

Ying and Lan Ting, served *dim sum*, and the Yuen Chong grocery store delivered to customers three times a week. It would even butcher and barbecue pigs on order.

**E**stablishing a family was a lengthy and expensive process. A man postponed his marriage until his work in the United States had earned him enough money to set up and support a household in China. Some could never afford it and remained single. After fourteen years in the United States, Wong returned to China at the age of thirty-five to take a bride.

Following custom, Wong had informed his family that he wanted to marry, and they had made all the arrangements—finding a bride, preparing for the ceremony, paying the dowry, and arranging the banquet. All the groom had to do was pay the expenses. Wong Yow confirms that he spent about \$3000 for his visit and marriage in 1935. He paid for his transportation and the dowry for the bride's family, and he hosted a banquet to which the entire village was invited. Finally, he purchased





a house with seven acres of rice fields to guarantee that his new wife would be properly provided for.

The wedding was one of the great events of Wong's life. His wedding picture, taken at a studio in Sek Keih, still hangs on his living room wall showing his father, his stepmother, his brothers, his sisters-in-law, and his half-brothers. After a short stay with his sixteen-year-old bride, Wong left China and returned alone to the Delta to earn a living for his wife and family. He had spent all the money he had saved during the previous fourteen years.

Wong recalls that during the Great Depression his wages were only about ten cents an hour, but he insists he did not care and that he was willing to take any kind of work. This was better than not working at all. If he made only two dollars a day, he could still save something because his cost of living was so low. He seldom spent money on himself

except for an occasional haircut, and he neither smoked nor gambled. Consequently, he was able to deposit, on average, over half his earnings in a savings account and still send an additional sum home to China.

Wong's goals had required him to develop abstemious habits from his first days in the United States. From 1922 to 1927, he was earning money to repay his father's outlay of \$1650 for his immigration to the United States. When his father returned to China in 1924, Wong had to support his family at home while simultaneously saving for his own marriage out of annual earnings which averaged \$300 to \$500. After his marriage, he managed to save enough to purchase a separate house for his stepmother, to make a second trip home in 1947, and to accumulate a fair amount of land in China, including seventeen acres of rice and a one-acre lichee orchard.

**A**fter 1936, Wong kept records of his earnings, pay scale, savings, and taxes. The records fall into three distinct periods: 1936 to 1941; 1942 to 1956; and 1958 to 1967. Between 1938 and 1940, Wong's hourly wages doubled from 15 to 30 cents an hour, but his annual income did not mirror this increase, suggesting that he worked fewer hours. In 1941 his hourly rate dropped to 25 cents, but that year's income was twenty-two percent more than that of the year before. Between 1936 and 1941, Wong's annual income ranged between \$600 and \$738. From 1942 to 1956, Wong's annual income fluctuated between \$1500 and \$3500.

Pay rates for farm labor were very unstable during those years, with gradual increases unrelated to experience or skill. On the average between 1958 and 1967, Wong paid seven percent of his earnings in taxes and nineteen percent for Social Security and medical insurance; he deposited fifty-four percent in the local bank and sent twenty percent home. Room and board were deducted before Wong received his wages, but his records of earnings and expenses do not include these deductions, which averaged \$1000 a year between 1958 and 1967. During that period, his remaining income fluctuated between \$2000 and \$5000 a year.

A typical work day was ten hours long, beginning at 6:00 a.m. At 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., the workers would have a brief snack of tea, salted crackers, and a piece of Chinese brown sugar, which they prepared and brought to the work site themselves. Lunch was from 11:30 to 1:00, with a meal provided by the cook at the ranch, and quitting time was about 6:00 p.m. In comparison, as the retired Chinese laborers are quick to point out, today's laborers finish their day by 2:00 p.m. Wong Yow's records indicate that he worked 3,414 hours in 1959, a typical year, an average of ten hours a day. However, the work was unevenly spread, with light periods between November and March but only two days off during the entire period between April and October. In July, September, and October, Wong recalls working at least twelve hours daily; during harvest time he held jobs at four orchards and a cannery at the same time.

In January and February, Wong's main task was pruning trees. Plant-



*(Left) In retirement Wong Yow enjoys tending the vegetable and fruit garden he has planted behind his house.*

PETER LEUNG COLLECTION

*(Right) Wong Yow today with the personal belongings he carried from one job to another as a farm laborer, including a pruning clipper, a bucket, a Chinese hat, bedding, and a small suitcase.*

PETER LEUNG



ing and weeding began in March. Irrigation came to the fore in April and May, along with removing blighted branches from fruit trees. July and August were harvest time, and weeding—applying herbicides to eradicate Johnson grass—again became the main task from September to December. Wong's other jobs included repairing crates, planting trees, aerating the soil, and repairing ladders. While many of the twenty-six tasks Wong listed for the year could be classified as unskilled labor, it is clear that Wong took pride in his work and understood the importance of each task.

**A**fter the Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949, Wong's wife left China for Hong Kong. The revolution had claimed all of Wong's investments in China, so he could not afford to bring her to the United States. Nor could he think of retire-

ment and returning home as he had expected to be able to do as he neared fifty, because his losses required him to continue working in the Delta to support his family. By 1957, he had saved enough to go to Hong Kong and buy an apartment for his wife and two children, a daughter and a son. At that time, housing in Hong Kong was reasonably priced and the American dollar was strong. Wong was able to purchase an apartment in a middle-income area for \$7000. His wife and children used two rooms for themselves while renting two rooms to subsidize their living and school expenses. Ten years later politics intervened in their lives again as Red Guard riots swept Hong Kong and the volatile situation sent housing prices plummeting. Wong hired an immigration lawyer and urged his wife to sell the apartment and come to the United States. The sale brought less than Wong had paid, but he did not want to risk losing his entire investment as he had done

in 1949. Wong smiled in 1980 when he admitted that the apartment is now worth about \$80,000, but it is clear that he does not regret the decision he made.

In 1968, Wong's wife and children finally came to the United States when Wong was sixty-eight. Since he was at last financially secure, if by no means wealthy, he was able to move off the ranch where he had worked for a decade and retire. He purchased a house in Locke where he, his wife, and children could finally live together for the first time in thirty-three years. Wong's daughter married and moved to Canada before his wife was killed by a garbage truck in 1978. His son left for college in 1980, and he has lived alone since then. □

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*(See notes beginning on p. 244.)*

# EATING ON THE RUSH

## ORGANIZING MEALS ON THE OVERLAND TRAIL

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*by Joseph R. Conlin*

---

"How do you like it overland?"  
His mother she will say;  
"All right, except for cooking,  
Then the devil is to pay.  
"For some won't cook, and others can't,  
And then it's curse and damn;  
The coffee pot's begun to leak,  
So has the frying pan."<sup>1</sup>





*Any game that crossed the path could become a welcome meal. Charles Nahl's drawing inspired this woodcut published in Sacramento by James Anthony and Co. in 1853.*

The Forty-Niners learned how much food to carry with them on the overland trail by studying the experiences of the military, the Oregon emigrants of the years just preceding the Gold Rush, and while it was credited only rarely, the example of the Mormons.<sup>2</sup> The gold seekers also borrowed from these pioneers when they organized the logistics of managing their food and preparing their meals. Thus, just as most overland companies associated under "the rules of war" for such an extraordinary enterprise as the crossing of a continent, electing captains and lieutenants in whom they invested military authority, the Forty-Niners also imitated the army's method of provisioning the wagon trains. Foodstuffs were generally purchased by the company with funds subscribed by individual members

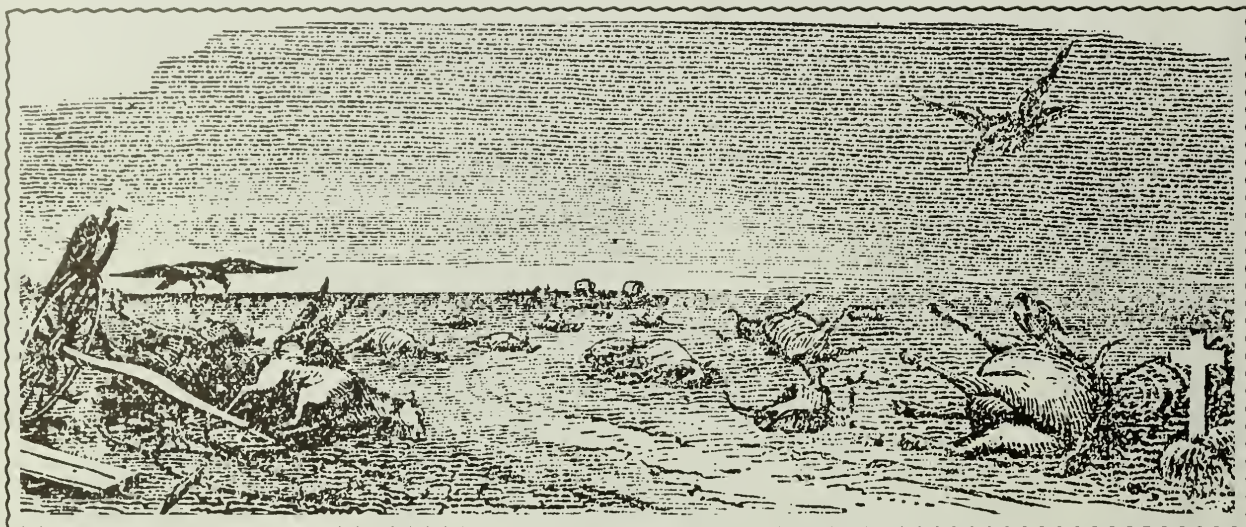
and kept in a kind of commissary. Once on the trail, mutually agreed upon rations were distributed weekly, usually on Sunday, which was a day of some leisure even in companies which did not observe the sabbath by staying put. Companies that were particularly taken with the military trappings of the crossing solemnly commissioned the man responsible for the stores quartermaster or steward.<sup>3</sup>

Although it was rare for a wagon train captain elected in Missouri to hold his rank when he arrived in California, the military system for marshalling provisions proved a boon and was recognized as such. It typically held firm into western Nevada when forks in the trail, shortages, fatigue, and the scent of gold resulted in the breakup of most companies and the division of what provisions were left. Before that mo-

ment, the emigrants seem to have been determined to avoid the conflicts bound to ensue if some groups within the company ran short of food while others remained well-fixed and fed. In general, they seem to have succeeded. While there were plenty of complaints about the quality of meals and the division of labor among the wagon trains, and while more than a few companies were caught short of provisions in the Humboldt Sink and the Sierra crossing, complaints about the fairness of food distribution are hard to find. Indeed, when shortages occurred, the fact that they were company-wide acted as a cohesive force.

Once beyond managing the larder the emigrants departed from military example. Where Captain John C. Frémont's and other army expeditions counted in their number professional cooks whose principal task





HUTCHINGS' ILLUSTRATED CALIFORNIA MAGAZINE

*Overland travelers were indelibly impressed by the hardships of the desert crossing memorialized in this 1853 engraving.*

was to prepare meals for the lot, such specialists were rare among the Forty-Niners.<sup>4</sup> Instead, the companies followed the example of the people who had been going to Oregon for nearly a decade and divided into messes of between six and nine people, each of which was responsible for its own cooking arrangements. "We have one large tent and two wagons for each mess," wrote a Wolverine Ranger. "We have nine messes in all, each with seven

men."<sup>5</sup> The system was practically universal.

It was entirely natural that the Oregonians should have arrived at this system. The Oregon migration had been a family affair. Between fifteen and twenty percent of those who struck out for the Willamette were women and a full 43.8 percent of the overland parties between 1843 and 1845 were "conjugal" with an additional forty-some percent tied by blood kinship.<sup>6</sup> They had bound together in a company for mutual protection and, in some cases, for the purpose of purchasing land in large tracts and setting up a township at their destination.

However, the family remained the institution in which those pioneers invested first loyalty. When the wagon wheels stopped turning on the Oregon Trail at noon and in the evening, the pilgrims broke up into familiar, culturally comfortable family blocs in which (unless there were a meeting or celebration on the agenda) they remained until the next day's shout to roll. "The family was," in Professor John Mack Faragher's phrase, "the most accessible unit of social organization."<sup>7</sup>

There were few women among the Forty-Niners. The number of adult females going west overland dropped from 20.3 percent of the total in 1846 to 5.7 percent in 1850. Recognizable family units were even fewer: only 1.4 percent of the emigrants of 1850 were children.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the family-size mess as the medium by which to organize the preparation and taking of meals had proved its utility in other ways and, on the trail of 1849, remained the norm.

Except on the sabbath, when observant companies of emigrants enjoyed their best meals of the week, possibly including a welcome crock of baked beans,<sup>9</sup> there was not time enough for a cook to set up and complete an operation for feeding more than a handful of people—a mess of six, seven, or maybe nine. Cooks "have to get over as many miles as the others," Oliver Goldsmith pointed out. "On coming into camp they have to procure water for coffee, let it be a long or a short distance from camp, and secure fuel and make it burn, rain or shine. And regardless of their fatigue or the distance travelled they have to go to

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George H. Baker's 1853 version of the "first night on the plains" reflects some diarists' assumptions that cooking was an easy chore.

work at once, while others having turned out their teams can rest."<sup>10</sup> All the evening work had to be completed within a couple of hours after the wagons were drawn up in their circles. The mid-day break was, of course, briefer, "barely long enough to eat a cold bite."<sup>11</sup>

Fuel was an object of common complaint. Just as the emigrants thought of the transcontinental trek in terms of legs prescribed by landmarks—from the Missouri River to Fort Kearny, along the Platte to Fort Laramie, and so on—they noted they passed through a number of distinct "fuel zones," none of them entirely congenial to people who had been accustomed to an abundance of cordwood. First, before Fort Kearny, fires were made of green willows, which needed to "be tried but once to enable one to give an opinion on this kind of fuel."<sup>12</sup>

Next, to about Fort Laramie, came the zone of buffalo chips: "It is the duty of the cooks on arriving at a camping place . . . to sally forth and collect chips for cooking. . . . It would amuse friends at home to see us . . . jump from the wagons, gunny bag in hand, and make a grand rush for the largest and driest chips. The contest is spirited and always fun-provoking."<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps not always. It took an average of five bushels to cook supper and breakfast for a mess. Moreover, while the fuel worked well enough when dry, when damp with dew the droppings were smoky and "almost fireproof," emitting "a delicate perfume."<sup>14</sup> There was an alternative for companies later on the trail: the abandoned wagons of their predecessors, "thousands of fine trunks, boxes, and barrels." Franklin Langworthy noted that "property that

cost \$100 in the States is none too much to make one a comfortable fire in an evening."<sup>15</sup>

In the Great Basin, if the landscape was often disheartening, the fuel improved. Greasewood or creosote bush was just barely preferable to buffalo chips but sagebrush was almost pleasant. In order to use it effectively, the cook dug a hole about a foot wide by two feet long and two feet deep and kept tossing in sage until there was a tolerable bed of hot, even-burning coals that had no less an endorser than Mark Twain. There was no smoke, he wrote in *Roughing It* "and consequently no swearing. Such a fire will keep all night and with very little replenishing; and it makes a very sociable camp-fire, and one around which the most impossible reminiscences sound plausible, instructive, and profoundly entertaining."<sup>16</sup>



But the Forty-Niners were not camping out on a high-spirited excursion from Virginia City to Lake Tahoe as Twain was. They were three or even four months into a transcontinental trek that had taken its toll in injury, disease, and exhaustion. So weary were the diarists by the time they reached the Sierra Nevada that they rarely mention the fact that they were once again cooking over respectable, all-American firewood.

The women who cooked on the overland trail—albeit a tiny minority of all the cooks—had perhaps the most informed perspective on its difficulties. They, at least, had the experience of cooking at home. Virtually all of them who left records found the task onerous and frustrating. “Although there is not much to cook,” Helen Carpenter wrote, “the difficulty and inconvenience of doing it amounts to a great deal. So by the time one has squatted around the fire and cooked bread and bacon, made several trips to and from the wagon, washed the dishes (with no place to drain them), and gotten things ready for an early breakfast, some of the others already have their night caps on. At any rate, it is time to go to bed. In respect to the women’s work, the days are all very much the same except when we stop for a day.”<sup>17</sup>

Mary S. Bailey complained about having to “sit down & eat like Indians.” Lodissa Frizzel wrote that cooking on the trail “goes so much ‘agin the grain’ at first.” She never really got over the fact that everything was so often “soaked with water and dry wood so scarce that our women could scarcely make coffee or fry meat.” Curt notes along the lines of “could not raise enough

fire to cook breakfast” and “lay down to sleep with nothing but dry crackers & cheese & meat” punctuate the diaries. James Clyman told of “one young lady which showed herself worthy of the bravest, undaunted pioneer of the West, for after having kneaded her dough she watched and nursed the fire and held an umbrella over the fire and her skillet with the greatest composure for near 2 hours.”<sup>18</sup>

Trekkers who belonged to a company that included women counted their blessings. “It’s so nice to have women folks manage the cooking,” wrote one. “Things look so much sweeter.” Another pilgrim was more utilitarian. When there were women in a party, “the meals were more regular and better cooked, thus preventing much sickness.” In at least two companies with female members, a man did the cooking but one of the women considered it “most amusing to see some of his operations” and in the other group the chef was quickly deposed in favor of a woman.<sup>19</sup>

In the overwhelming majority of companies, where all members were men, the assignment of trail tasks often caused trouble, as Noah Brooks explained:

*At the onset none knew who should drive the oxen, who should do the cooking, or whose ingenuity would be taxed to mend broken wagons or tattered clothing. . . . We saw not a little fighting in the camps . . . and these bloody fisticuffs were invariably the outcome of disputes over the divisions of labor. It is not going too far to conjecture that resistance to doing women’s work was pronounced and because . . . everyone was responsible for his own mending, cooking was the big problem. A mid-19th century farmer or tradesman was simply unlikely to know*

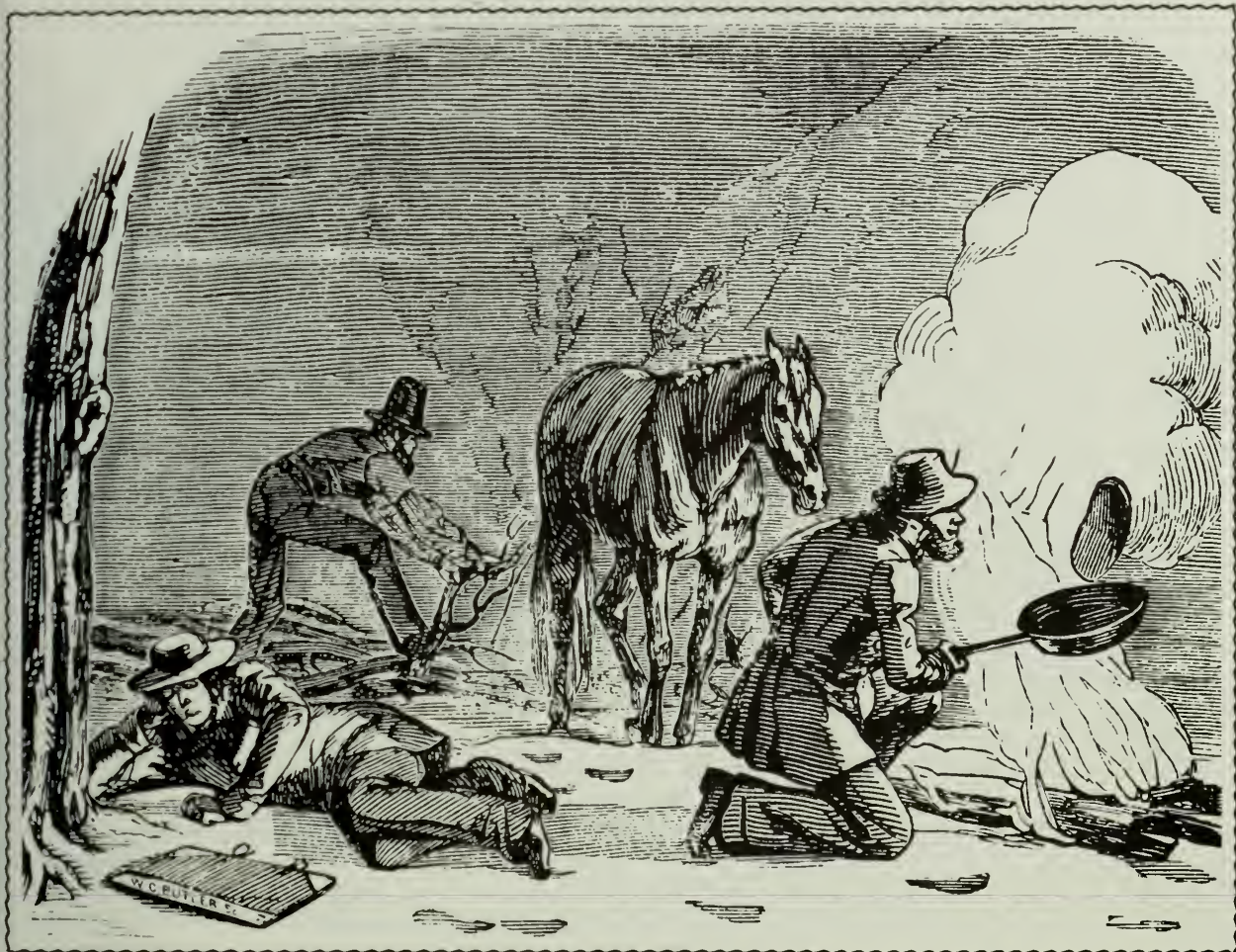
*how, whatever he felt about the inappropriateness of a man mixing dough, wielding the long handled frying pans, fending off the complaints that there was no dried apple pie or that it was atrocious.*<sup>20</sup>

Consider, as an example of Brooks’ observations, the experience of John A. Johnson of Tennessee. As was the case in many messes, Johnson’s group decided before leaving Missouri that each member would take a turn at the cook fire. On April 1, 1849—heady early day of the great adventure—Johnson wrote boastfully to his wife that “all of us seem to understand cooking as well as our wives and are anxious to try our hands.” For a few weeks, the men of the mess rotated in a job they considered quite desirable. “We have, as I said before, several excellent cooks in our company. Some crack on making one thing and some another and really we get along very well in this respect. Today each mess made a pot pie; I had the honor of officiating at our mess; it was good of course.”<sup>21</sup>

The novelty of tossing off woman’s work with a Yankee Doodle song wore off quickly, however, and Johnson’s mess decided to name one man fulltime cook in return for—this also was common practice—exemption from other camp responsibilities, including the sentinel duty which everyone hated. John jumped at the chance to take the job and congratulated himself on his good luck because it “will not be burdensome as I have a natural taste for that kind of work and they all think so.”<sup>22</sup>

Escoffier lasted a week: *I have given up the office of chief cook and take my turn with the rest and my portion of other duties. I had rather do so as it is more slavish work than I had*





*Fuel was plentiful in the Sierra, but flour was running low as the "last flapjack" was fried.*

anticipated and by far the hardest post to occupy. I found I was working all the time during our halts while others were at least a portion of the time resting. I could not get time to write a letter or a note—as for guarding, my time will not come oftener than once in two and perhaps three nights and then only two hours at a time, with some eight or ten others.<sup>23</sup>

Most Forty-Niners were a little quicker and more gracious in acknowledging how much they had taken for granted at home. "I feel greatly the want of counsel and advice from you or others in biscuit-making and in some approved, or improved method of brewing coffee . . .," wrote a Kentuckian to his wife from a company just ahead of Johnson's. "I have always been inclined to deride the vocation of ladies until now. But I must confess it is by far the most irksome I have

ever tried. . . . I wish you could take supper with me, that you might judge the hardness and durability of our biscuits. I must at some time send you a recipe for making this lasting sort."<sup>24</sup>

James Lyne may have had something more than biscuits on his mind but it would be a mistake to read his letter as a coded Victorian euphemism. Helen Carpenter's husband, who had his wife with whom to share a bedroll, made the same discovery of his culinary deficiencies. On the Fourth of July, always a day of rest and celebration on the trail, he "wanted something special for supper" and suggested "corn starch." Helen had never heard of it as an Independence Day dish "and furthermore I did not know how to cook it."

But he did, "'just as Aunt Hannah used to.' So I stood by and saw him burn his fingers and scorch the starch which when done was the consistency of very thick gravy. But we ate it, for on a trip like this one must not be particular."<sup>25</sup>

The observant Mrs. Carpenter, one of the more perceptive of the trans-continental diarists, commented several times on the tumbling traditional sex roles took on the Overland Trail. She thanked the stars, for example, that her own husband was a Yankee for, if he was not much of a cook, he did not disdain to play subordinate at mealtime giving her a hand with her tasks. She also noticed another family party in which:

*the old gentleman farmer is very good to help 'Mother' in the culinary arrangements. He makes the fires, gets out the pots and kettles and the eatables and*



helps generally while 'Mother' makes the bread and coffee. 'Sister' is too small to do more than be in the way. When the four sons and men are ready for a meal each for the time being becomes his own cook so there is no occasion for anyone to grumble. Willows are sharpened and slices of bacon speared and held in the fire ad lib. It looks quite amusing.

It was a little different with Missourians, the object of Mrs. Carpenter's cryptofeminist contempt. Missouri women "had very little help" from their surly husbands.<sup>26</sup>

The women who stayed behind seemed to recognize their value too. They punctuated their letters with wishes they could dispatch familiar goodies—"a cherry pie to you on the plains"—as well as anxious letters. "Every day we wonder where poor William is, and we wish we could send you pancakes, baked potatoes, beans, and beef by telegraph."<sup>27</sup>

Not that every male trail cook was a nincompoop. In fact, meals on the trail varied as marvelously at the apparently identical messes, even within a company, as meals vary today at identical bungalows in a suburban tract. If the basic provisions were the same, just as the markets accessible to us are the same, tastes and values differed radically, not to mention the skill of the appointed cook. So, one mess on the trail bolted greasy slops while another, perhaps fifty yards away, was confronted with the problem that faced William Swain. The food at his mess was so good "we are warned by discretion not to injure ourselves by gratifying our appetites, as we might burst the boiler."<sup>28</sup>

Not only were Mr. Bailey and Dr. Wells "the finest cooks out," preparing breakfasts of the customary "fried bacon, boiled rice, pancakes made of flour and Indian meal, pilot

bread, flour gravy, apple sauce made of dried apples, sugar, and coffee," Swain and his messmates were as adventurous gourmets as conditions permitted. They ventured a go at every sort of game that had the ill fortune to cross the road when the Rangers were around: rabbits, deer, antelope, elk, squirrels, doves, sage hens, ducks, geese, and crayfish ("fresh water lobsters"). William Swain did not sample rattlesnake but plenty of others did; they called the meat "bush fish." However, he commented that "prairie dogs are nice eating" and marmots "very fat and good." Like most Forty-Niners, he liked buffalo steak, "certainly . . . the sweetest and tenderest meat I have ever eaten."<sup>29</sup>

Another rather over-exuberant stylist wrote: "Oh, if I could only send this great tender piece of tenderloin to my friends at home! Such delicious, juicy meat I have never put under the operations of my masticatory organs." One company celebrated the Fourth with "ice cream" flavored by wild peppermint, an extraordinary treat made possible by the high elevation of their camp. More than a few Forty-Niners were quite pleased with their diet and for those who arrived in California free of scurvy, it is well to remember the observation of a number of contemporaries that the overlanders were far better fit physically for the heavy work of placer mining than the argonauts who came by sea.<sup>30</sup>

For a time in California, the miners reinstituted the mess system for food preparation and service, while their larder remained limited to staples they had known on the trail.

*In Cabins rude, our daily food  
Is quickly counted o'er;  
Beans, bread, salt meat, is all we  
eat—*

*And the cold earth is our floor.*

Several partnerships would throw in together in somewhat larger groups than on the trail, cooking by turns or, on holidays, sharing in the labor.

*Smith's knack is that of slicing tomatoes; Sutton can fry potatoes better than any man in the Southern Mines; Brown prides himself on chili stews, learned in South America, involving a strong application of red peppers; Dan's forte is broiling steak. They are long and social meals: there is no business to hurry one off; nothing to do save wash up the dishes, light the pipes, and then sit on the street in the shade of the locust trees.<sup>31</sup>*

Few early camps were so idyllic, however. The most common comments about miner cooking were just barely printable. What had been tolerated on the trail became a burden in California. Moreover, the goldlust that had launched the great emigration was reinvigorated on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, and most men wanted to be at nothing during their waking hours but shoveling gravel. As the chroniclers of Mother Lode culture frequently observed, every aspect of housekeeping was neglected. Cooking was "to be dispatched as quickly as possible and strictly as an incidental." If chef duty had been difficult back on the Platte, it meant the possibility of missing a thumb-sized nugget on the Feather or American.<sup>32</sup>

The Forty-Niners did not therefore settle for even ruder chuck in the diggings than they had known on the crossing (or on the sea routes). On the contrary, the monotony of their meals during those six





Miners often preferred to spend their time looking for gold rather than preparing food.

long months in transit, the horrors of amateur cookery, and the freely flowing quality of money during California's first years instilled in the men a taste for highly seasoned, spiced, and sauced luxury foods prepared by professionals.

A highly refined *gourmandaise* came to characterize living on the mining frontier for half a century. Mrs. M.M. Matthews would describe the miners of Virginia City of the 1870s as "epicures who could not get different dishes enough to suit their perverted tastes. I never saw people like them, as a class; they wanted so many kinds of rich dishes to eat at one meal." Virtually every curiosity seeker in the great hard rock mining camps of the West was titillated to find miners off their shifts dining at restaurants described as the equals of Delmonico's and Oscar Ranshofer's Waldorf.<sup>33</sup> But

they might have been surprised to know that the tradition reached back to the first days on the Mother Lode when unbathed, hulking, bearded, denim-clad Forty-Niners hunkered around fires warming cans of lobster and wearily growling that it had been some considerable time since the pickled oysters had been passed around.

Indeed, just so soon as a placer camp was sufficiently large and stable to support a restaurant providing often quite fancy meals, a restaurant there was. Red Dog, in Nevada County, was home to only 200 miners, no metropolis, but the town boasted a commercial eatery featuring "Choice Meals Served Up at All Hours, Day or Night." Another camp restaurant was operated by "Ned, the violin-playing

mulatto cook" and allowed the diner of discriminating taste to wash down his dinner with Madeira, claret, or champagne.<sup>34</sup> No later than 1852, a company of argonauts who had arrived in 1850 held a reunion banquet in San Francisco at which they began with one (or maybe more) of four "*potages*" including a presumably satisfactory *à la Reine*, a *Colbert*, *Milanaise*, and *Bisque d'Écrivise*.

They then dug into five *hors d'oeuvres*, five *entrées froides*, nine *entrées chaudes*, five roasts, six *légumes*, and, of course, an *entremet sucre*,—any of eight of them. There is no record of any of the diners saying as much but it is safe to conclude with the observation that six months on bacon, flapjacks, dried apples, and corn starch pudding will do that sort of thing to a man.<sup>35</sup> □

(See notes beginning on p. 244.)





(Top) San Benito County High School, Hollister.  
 (Second from top) Bishop Union High School.  
 (Right) Watsonville High School.



# W.H. WEEKS

## CALIFORNIA SCHOOL ARCHITECT

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*by Betty Lewis*

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**T**he construction of a new school building is so rare an occasion that it makes an epoch in the average school system," wrote architect William H. Weeks in 1911. Noting that "so few schools are built in the average district, that the Trustees are at a loss as to how to proceed," Weeks offered his services as a consultant to "any school board that may desire information or advice in the preliminary steps connected with the erection of new school buildings . . ." Epochal though the event might be for an individual school district, however, new school buildings were going up all over California in the 1910s and 1920s, and Will Weeks was designing them. In 1916, when Weeks was chosen to build Watsonville's third high school, he had just finished or was working on schools in Monterey, Eureka, Glenn County, Santa Cruz, Auburn, Winters, Woodland, Roseville, Red Bluff, and Paso Robles. In another landmark year, Weeks was at work in 1922 on high schools in Pomona, Santa Barbara, San Mateo, Taft, Santa Rosa, Napa, Santa Clara, Mt. Diablo, Piedmont, Colusa, Turlock,

Mountain View, Exeter, Lemoore, Del Norte County, Elk Grove, and Esparta.

Weeks' career coincided neatly with California's school building boom. Born in 1864 in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Weeks moved with his family to Denver where he studied architecture at the Berger Institute. Thereafter he entered his father's construction firm, by now located in Wichita, Kansas. In 1891 Will Weeks married Maggie Haymaker and moved to Oakland. A year later he was summoned to Watsonville to build a church, and in 1894 he opened an office while working on the town's first high school. Maggie soon joined him in Watsonville, where they stayed until 1911. The Weeks had nine children, of whom five lived to maturity, including a son who became a partner in his father's firm in 1924. By 1897 Weeks was designing so many of the buildings in the new factory town of Spreckels that he opened another office in Salinas. In all, Weeks designed over 200 buildings in Spreckels, including the school, the Spreckels Company's office building, and a large number of houses. In 1905, Weeks opened

an office in San Francisco which enabled him to participate actively in the post-earthquake reconstruction.

While Will Weeks was acquiring experience and establishing himself as a reliable architect, California was getting ready to expand its educational system. After enacting one of the first compulsory attendance laws in the United States in 1874, the state added high schools to the free public school system in 1904. Between 1910 and 1920, the number of public school students more than doubled from 272,420 to 663,476, reflecting the rapid increase in California's population. Kindergartens became part of the system in 1920, and in the next years California passed tax and finance laws which for the first time provided realistic backing for a comprehensive, statewide public school system.

But timing was not the only ingredient in Weeks' success. His early adoption of reinforced concrete as a building material and his work in small towns combined to give him an advantage in the educational boom. The San Francisco earthquake had demonstrated reinforced concrete's superiority over brick in a seismically active region: amid the

rubble of the city, reinforced concrete structures had survived nearly intact. In 1915 Weeks anticipated later safety regulations by stating categorically that unreinforced brick walls and heavy tile roofs made an unacceptable combination for schools and by prescribing fireproof stairs and corridor floors in schools of more than one story.<sup>2</sup> "Half of the new school buildings erected in the United States each year are built to replace structures which have been destroyed by fire," noted *American City* in 1920. "How can we prevent this growing waste of wealth and this constant menace to human lives? Only one answer seems logical, and that is that we erect *school buildings which cannot burn*."<sup>3</sup>

Weeks had pioneered the concept in Watsonville after the wooden school building he designed there in 1895 burned in 1901. For its replacement, he had used reinforced concrete in both exterior and interior walls, persuading the school board that it would be cheaper in the long run to build a solid structure than to continue rebuilding after fires. He also helped school boards under-

stand the value of such safeguards as fire doors and easily accessible fire escapes. The Santa Barbara high school, which Weeks completed in 1924, survived a devastating earthquake a year later without a crack. In high schools built in Watsonville in 1917 and Healdsburg in 1918, Weeks introduced ramps to replace stairs, arguing that ramps offered "more space for the same cost; [are] safer in fire or panic; [are] easier to clean; [are] more secure; [are] easier for wheelchairs, less noisy and service elevators can be eliminated."<sup>4</sup> The Watsonville high school is still in use.

Weeks paid close attention to such practical details while carefully keeping his costs within his original bids. He claimed in 1915 that only once had he built a school which cost more than his projection. In its May 1915 issue, which featured Weeks in a cover story, *Architect and Engineer* described Weeks as a "safe man" whom school board members "instinctively trust" and who would not "advocate untried novelties or indulge in experiments likely to inflate the outlay." Although he worked in a variety of styles—from Mission to Tudor—most of Weeks' schools shared a cost-saving formula: two floors and a basement. Conscientious and hardworking, he made sure his work could be depended upon.

In addition to his mastery of his craft, however, another aspect of Weeks' success may have been his self promotion. He published many brochures and pamphlets advertising his school buildings and offering his services as a consultant. In addition to *Architect and Engineer*, his work was also featured in *Architectural Record*, *American Architect*, *Con-*

*crete in Architecture and Engineering*, and other technical journals as well as in the local press in the communities where he worked and lived. *American School Board Journal* hailed his work in an article titled "An Architectural Achievement in California" in November 1923.

Weeks' firm built approximately 1,500 structures, mostly in California, and his private homes and commercial buildings dot the state. But it is for schools that Weeks is primarily remembered. At his death, the *San Jose Mercury Herald* eulogized, "Weeks was a genuinely great architect and all over California there are monuments to his skill. For that matter, all over California there are thousands of youngsters whose lives are a little more happy and a little more healthy because of what W. H. Weeks knew about school architecture. Mr. Weeks was a specialist in school design and knew what exposures provide students with the best light, what type of hallway permits quickest passage from one class to another, what type of exterior brings with it the greatest beauty. . . . Schools . . . were his chief love and he used to say that no man in California had designed as many. His pride in his schools was justified. . . ." <sup>5</sup> (*San Jose Mercury Herald*, April 30, 1936).

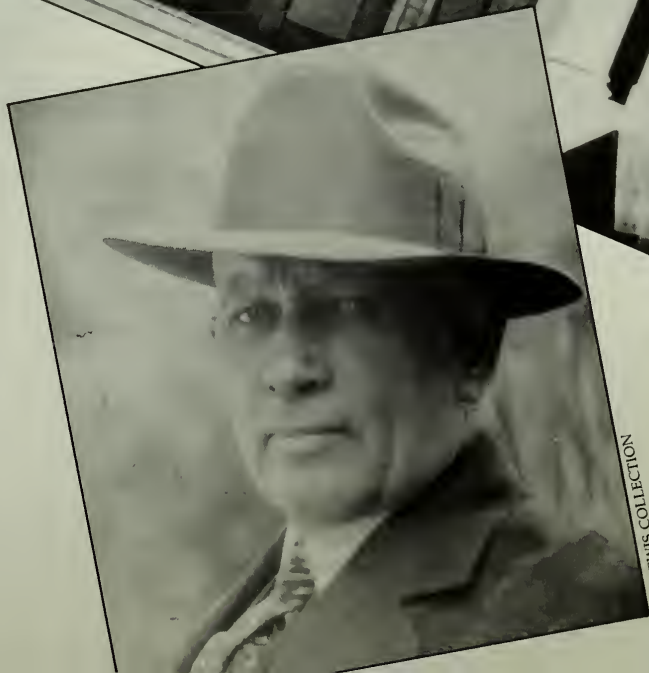
Today Weeks' name has been nearly forgotten. But during the 1910s and 1920s, he was one of the busiest architects in northern and central California. At its height, his firm employed thirty people in five offices. In the California towns where he worked, schools and other buildings designed by Weeks still form an enduring part of the landscape, a testimony to the meshing of an individual life and a historical moment. □ (See notes on p. 245.)

Betty Lewis began to research the life of W. H. Weeks when she moved into a house he designed in 1966. Her articles on Weeks have appeared in a variety of Monterey Bay publications and she has completed a full-length biography. She is also the author of *Victorian Houses of Watsonville* (1974), *Walking and Driving Tour of Historic Watsonville* (1975), *Watsonville Memories that Linger* (1976 and 1980), and *Monterey Bay Yesterday* (1977). Her work on Weeks was aided by her hobby: Lewis collects postcards and her collection of 50,000 includes many views of Weeks buildings in California towns.





ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER



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Entrance to Woodland High School.  
William H. Weeks.

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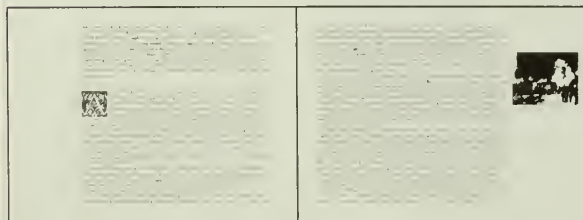
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# REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

## Cawdor.

By Robinson Jeffers. (Covelo: Yolla Bolly Press, 1983, 140 folio pages. Afterward by James D. Houston and woodblocks by Mark Livingston. Signed limited edition of 225 numbered copies, cloth and leather bound with protective slipcase, \$275.

## Flight.

By John Steinbeck. (Covelo: Yolla Bolly Press, 1984, 64 folio pages. Afterward by Wallace Stegner and colored woodblocks by Karen Wikstrom. Signed limited edition of 250 numbered copies, cloth bound with protective slipcase, \$225.)

## The Daring Young Man On the Flying Trapeze And Other Stories.

By William Saroyan. (Covelo: Yolla Bolly Press, 1984, 216 quarto pages. Afterward by Herbert Gold and colored woodblocks by Bill Prochnow. Signed limited edition of 175 copies, cloth bound with protective slipcase, \$285.

## True Bear Stories.

By Joaquin Miller. (Covelo: Yolla Bolly Press, 1985, 80 pages. Forward by William Everson and woodblocks by Vincent Perez. Signed limited edition of 250 numbered copies, leather bound with protective slipcase, \$285.

Reviewed by David Rains Wallace, author of *The Turquoise Dragon*, *The Wilder Shore*, *The Klamath Knot*, and *The Dark Range*.

Books made by craftspeople instead of machines can be a little intimidating to modern readers accustomed to standardized slickness, bright colors, and cheap paper and bindings. At least, I felt

so when confronted with the Yolla Bolly Press's California Writers of the Land Series. The four books seemed heavy, stiff, grandfatherly. They even smelled grandfatherly: I suppose the latigo and Morocco leather, Dutch linen, German cotton, and Amish horse denim in which they are bound evoked childhood memories of old-fashioned, pre-plastic households.

When I opened them, the pages didn't flop apart easily as with mass produced books: the weighty rag papers turned one at a time with a kind of reticent dignity, as though not quite sure they *wanted* to be read unless I was prepared to give them my *full* attention. The letterpress print didn't run lightly across the page as it does with offset printing. Each letter, firmly but neatly pressed into the paper, seemed determined not to be skipped over by the careless eye. And all four books were quite different: different sizes, different binding and typefaces, different design and illustrations. This also disconcerted modern expectations of standardized manufacture in a serial edition.

They didn't quite *feel* like my usual idea of books. Then it occurred to me that these slightly daunting objects were *not* books in the way that mass produced books are: They were not products, but tools. They were not made to be consumed and discarded, but for permanent use, to be cared for and passed on. Suddenly the weight and reticence seemed right, as such qualities do in a piece of handmade pottery. The books weren't simply disposable display containers for their contents, they were permanent receptacles for them. As such, they gave the contents a value hard to quantify in contemporary market terms, because to do so one would have to factor in the value they will have for future as well as present readers. As a writer as well as a reader, such receptacles seem to me estimable, and enviable.

Of course, the ultimate value of a book lies in its contents. Leather-bound, acid-free-paper editions of bad books would



Joaquin Miller and a "true bear."

be a waste of time, although there is always doubt as to what constitutes a *good* book. Bookmakers necessarily set sail into more dubious waters than do potters, who can be reasonably sure that today's pot will hold tomorrow's tea well enough.

In one sense, the publishers have sailed close to shore with the contents of the series; in another sense, they've taken some risks. They have chosen acknowledged (if not necessarily well-known) classics, works by Jeffers, Steinbeck, Saroyan and Joaquin Miller, and they have hired four of California's best known living writers, James D. Houston, Wallace Stegner, Herbert Gold, and William Everson, to write commentaries on them. Yet the choices are not obvious ones. They don't reflect "balance," "geographical spread," "market appeal"—the bottom line thinking of the standardized commercial approach. Instead they reflect the personal enthusiasms of press owners James and Carolyn Robertson. The reader of the series is getting the vision of California not only of Jeffers, Steinbeck, Saroyan, and Miller, but of the Robertsons as well, and there is always risk in expressing personal vision.

As might be expected, the Robertson's vision is selective. In this series, at least, it concentrates on northern and central

California: there is little about the southern megalopolis, the desert, the Hollywood side of the state. Still, it manages to encompass quite a lot of California history and geography, from Miller's rip-roaring mountain pioneer era, to the grimmer pictures of frontier and backwoods life in Jeffers and Steinbeck, to Saroyan's exuberant but anxious vignettes of life in Central Valley vineyards and San Francisco back streets. One gets a strong sense, in reading through the series, of how California has changed, of how the almost unimaginably expansive place Joaquin Miller knew in his youth has been carved into successively smaller areas of experience. Miller's protagonist moves virtually at will across the entire state, but Jeffers' and Steinbeck's can't get beyond the Santa Lucia mountains above their Big Sur homesteads, and Saroyan's Daring Young Man is confined, in the end, to a rented room.

The vision is further expanded by the commentaries, which add a literary context to the historical and geographical ones. As with everything else about the series, each essay is quite different from the others. Houston's is inquiring, Stegner's meditative, Gold's elegaic (Saroyan was a personal friend), Everson's evocative. Yet all the essays say something of how these particular works of literature came to be part of California culture, and of what makes them worth keeping.

The Robertsons perhaps have taken another risk by hiring relatively young artists without big names to illustrate the series. If it was a risk, it has paid off, as far as I can see: the woodblock prints complement the texts and design very well. They are sometimes crude (as woodblocks perhaps should be) but always lively and expressive, and the lithographed colors in the Steinbeck and Saroyan editions are gorgeous set against the subtle tints of the sleeves, jackets, and endpapers. They made me realize how much the overabundance of brilliant color in most commercial picture books (and in our Madison Avenued



TRUE BEAR STORIES

Treeing a bear.

lives in general) actually dulls the sensual enjoyment of color.

I don't mean to give the impression that there is some kind of uniformity about the illustrations. Although working in the same medium, the artists have very different styles. One of the successes of the series is that each style matches the literary style of its text: Mark Livingston's expressionism with Jeffers' moodiness, Karen Wikstrom's lively delicacy with Steinbeck's fine eye for detail, Bill Prochnow's satirical edge with Saroyan's humor, and Vincent Perez's strong modeling with Miller's exclamations and hyperbole.

At a time in which the demise not only of letterpress and handmade bindings but of books in general is fashionably proclaimed, the Robertson's endeavors may appear quixotic. Yet the books themselves seem to contradict such pessimism. In their reticent, weighty way, they radiate a certain assurance. After all, they don't need much—no electrical outlets, high technology, satellite hookups—just a succession of appreciative owners. William Saroyan expresses something of this assurance in a holograph page that the Robertsons have reproduced at the end of *The Daring Young Man*:

"The coming into being of this my first book was the great event of my young

life—and the physical book itself was so real, so true, so ineradicable that in a matter of an instant I was immortal—the proof was in the weight and substance of the book."

For further information on the California Writers of Land series, contact the Yolla Bolly Press, Main Street, Covelo, CA 95428. □

## *The Expeditions of John Charles Frémont. Volume 3: Travels from 1848 to 1854.*

Edited by Mary Lee Spence. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984. lxxxiii, 641 pp. \$37.50.)

Reviewed by Gerald Thompson, Editor of *The Historian* and Associate Professor of History, University of Toledo, author of *Edward F. Beale and the American West*.

Readers of this magazine need no introduction to the career of John C. Frémont. Even today, the general public inevitably links his name with nineteenth century California. I can think of no other American whose career so often scaled the heights of success only to plunge downward to the depths of disaster. This operatic quality of Frémont's life has been recognized by many authors, but none has yet managed to capture this most mercurial of western figures. A sense of mystery still surrounds the historical Frémont, perhaps due to a failure of scholars to understand the depth and complexity of their subject. The publication of this book of Frémont papers, the third volume of *The Expeditions of John C. Frémont*, helps to dispel much of the haze that continues to obscure Frémont's historical image.

So much new information is herein presented about Frémont, his family, and his business associates, that all previous biographies now seem shallow



and obsolete. Mary Lee Spence, a professor of history at the University of Illinois, has performed a herculean task of research as she has sought out and analyzed the documents of Frémont's life. This third volume deals with Frémont's career between 1848 and 1854. During these years he led two expeditions into the West (including the Disastrous Fourth, 1848-49), was elected as a United States Senator from California, and worked mightily to develop his business interests. His life has become far more complex than in the two previous volumes and this made Dr. Spence's editorial chores all the more arduous.

Probably the most significant thing to emerge from this volume is convincing documentation that Frémont devoted much of his energy during this time to money-making activities. The editor has carefully unravelled Frémont's business dealings—from those questionable cattle contracts through the activity that swirled around the Las Mariposas land grant. It appears that even when Frémont was engaged in scientific activity his motives stemmed from pecuniary desires. The two "pathfinding" expeditions were prompted by the plans of Benton and Frémont, and associates. A similar pattern is noticed in Frémont's political activities. As one reads through Frémont's correspondence during the two years he served as U.S. Senator, there is an absence of concern for California issues. He is mainly engaged in using his political position to advance his own interests. No hint surfaces that he will become the first presidential candidate of a new party built upon the moral foundation of opposing slavery's extension. Could Frémont have been as opportunistic in his Republican politics as during his California days?

Many persons will want to know if this volume contains anything to change our understanding of the Disastrous Fourth Expedition of 1848-49. The editor has wisely chosen not to reproduce all the accounts of that fiasco that are already in print, but instead concentrates on less available documentation. The

best letters in the entire volume are found in this section and were written by Andrew Cathcart, a Scotsman who had served in the British army before coming to St. Louis with George Frederick Ruxton. A typical example of Cathcart's pithy commentary on western life is found in a letter he penned from the south bank of the Arkansas River: "I have not had a squaw yet," he wrote a friend, "some were offered by the Comanches but such brutes, all of them and the 'Children of the Forest' suffer from severe Poxes . . . (p. 71)."

The background research for this volume has been painstaking and meticulous. The only factual error detected was insignificant: Mary Edwards Beale did not accompany her husband, E. F. Beale, to Havana in 1849 (p. 116 - fn 1). When Beale traveled to California with a government commission for Frémont, Mrs. Beale decided to remain in New York after learning that Havana had been quarantined due to a yellow fever outbreak.

Without slighting the excellent annotations, the best aspect of volume three of *The Expeditions of John Charles Frémont* is the editor's seventy-nine page introduction. So much new information on California's history has been packed into those pages that they are mandatory reading for anyone with a serious interest in the state's early history. Let's hope that additional volumes of Frémont correspondence will follow so we can learn about his career as a Republican pathmarker. □

## *Inventing the Dream, California Through the Progressive Era.*

By Kevin Starr. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, 380 pp., \$19.95 cloth.)

Reviewed by J. S. Holliday, Director Emeritus of the California Historical Society and author of *The World*

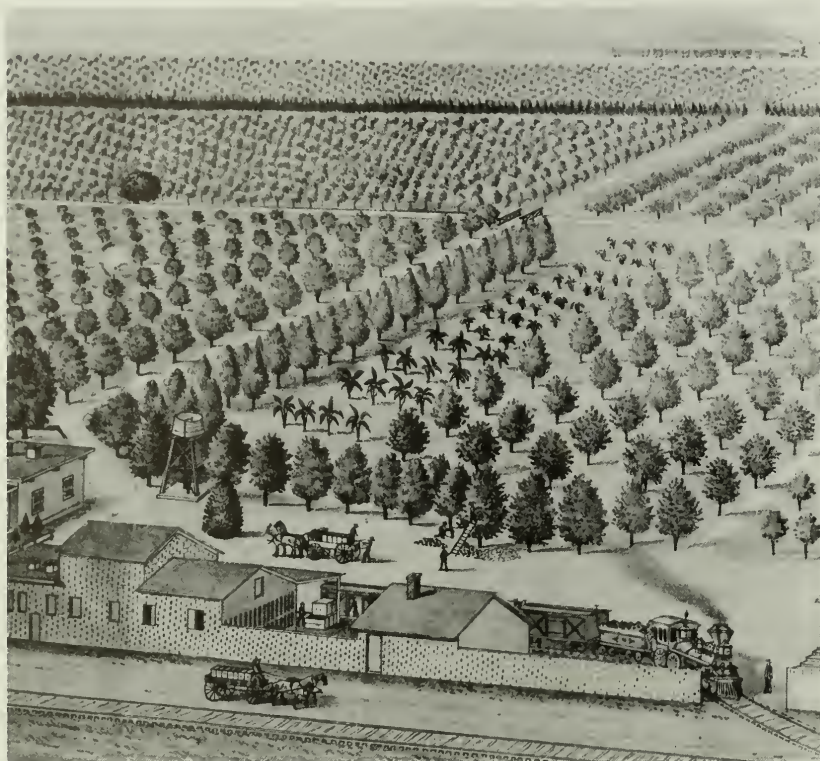
Rushed In, The California Gold Rush Experience.

Disparaging the other end of the state and talk of division are part of California's history dating back to the Spanish and Mexican eras and to the state legislature's 1859 bill which called for separation of Northern and Southern California. The United States Congress saved California from that disaster. Now what we need to insure not only political but economic unity is better understanding of the interdependence of the several regions of this state. Thanks to Kevin Starr we have a valuable and impressive means to achieve that understanding.

*Inventing the Dream* is the second volume (preceded by *Americans and the California Dream*, 1973) in Starr's promised five volume history of California. To understand, to appreciate California's astonishing growth and ever-increasing influence on this nation and the world, we will need the last three volumes of this work which Starr has so brilliantly begun.

Historian-author-journalist-librarian-professor-public speaker, Kevin Starr shares (with enthusiasm and a sense of urgency) what he has learned through many years of research and thinking, talking, writing, rethinking and rewriting. There is about him and his writing a robust confidence which allows him figuratively to grab the reader by the lapels and say: "Did I tell you . . . which reminds me that . . . and one more point." Purposeful and eloquent, Starr's enthusiasm is directed and justified by his knowledge. Wallace Stegner has observed that his "learning is awesome."

Though *Inventing the Dream* is largely concerned with Los Angeles and Southern California (as *Americans and the California Dream* centered on San Francisco and Northern California), the story ranges widely, from Pasadena and Riverside to San Jose and Sonoma, and introduces dozens of men and women whom we admire for their achievements and enjoy for their personalities. Like the director of an entertaining movie



Orchard where the first California oranges were raised and shipped to the East in 1882.

which we want to see again, Starr has crowded his book with people we will remember—politicians, movie makers, farmers, utopians, architects, journalists, authors, reformers and entrepreneurs. Through his major and minor characters Starr reveals the trends and the long-term influences of their work and their times.

In exploring the course of Southern California's image building to the 1920's, Starr tells of Major Benjamin Truman who promoted the area as a place for the good life, describing the Southland as "semi-tropical." But this image did not sit well with American values. It implied "a sun that would sap the Northern European sources of American will, turning industrious immigrants into loafers." And so Truman evoked a Mediterranean comparison which was ideal because "the Mediterranean was rich in both nature and history and Southern California wanted both blessings."

One of the strengths of this book is Starr's lengthy chapter on the evolution of California agriculture. Here he recounts the importance of wheat as the

transition economy from gold mining to the next era of agricultural growth—the export of fruits and vegetables to the national market. He tells of the citrus industry: "The groves extending from seashore to mountain range and the great packing sheds adjacent to them, banked by stands of eucalyptus trees which channeled the breezes to an advantageous angle as the fruit remained piled high in storage preparatory to packing. . . ." The citrus towns "adorned with neo-Mission train stations and Romanesque public buildings added their own version of the Southern California Mediterraneanism to the suggestions of the surrounding landscape." At the center of it all was Riverside with its British investment and influence, its polo club, tennis club, opera house, Mission Inn and most grandiloquently—the Riverside County Courthouse, "a Roman imperial wedding cake of columns, towers and pediments which . . . underscored Riverside's exuberant self-confidence. . . ." Starr describes, as well, the people, places and techniques which nurtured the growth of California's wine industry.

Chapter by lively chapter the story of Southern California and its relationship to the rest of the state is carried forward to the Progressives' program for reform of corrupt Los Angeles which succeeded in 1906 with the election of George Alexander (age seventy) as mayor. This Olympian figure represented "a former and better pre-industrial America that was ever at the psychological center of Progressivism." From their success in Los Angeles, the Southern California reformers captured political control of California in the gubernatorial election of 1910. With the opening of the legislature in 1911 (marked by the chaplain's admonition "Give us a square deal for Christ's sake"), California entered an era of remarkable political and social reform carefully analyzed by Starr.

At the outset of his book Starr observes that "the attitudes and style of Southern California were exported via the film industry to the rest of the nation" with the consequence that "Southern California was destined to secure for itself a fixed place in the collective daydream of America." At the end of *Inventing the Dream* Starr devotes two thoroughly informative, engrossing chapters to the men and women whose genius and greed, showmanship and scandal made Hollywood "a town, an industry, a state of mind, a self-actualizing myth." In a typically insightful observation, Starr notes: "In reverse compensation for the demands of the Protestant ethic, Americans asked the stars and leading producers and directors of Hollywood to live the life that every American would supposedly live if given the opportunity. . . . Hollywood stars thus became an aristocracy, American style. . . ."

From the muddy realities of migrant laborers to the calculated glamor of Mary Pickford's life, *Inventing the Dream* reveals and studies the people and the forces which directed the growth and the image of California to the 1920's. It is an achievement deserving respect and certain to give lasting value. □



# *The Zoot-Suit Riots: The Psychology of Symbolic Annihilation.*

By Mauricio Mazón. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984, xiii, 163 pp., \$12.95 cloth.)

Reviewed by Andrew Rolle, Cleland Professor of History, Occidental College and author of *California: A History and Los Angeles: From Pueblo to City of Tomorrow*.

This little book is probably the most incisive analytic study yet produced by a Chicano scholar. Trained in psychoanalytic theory as well as in the study of history, Mauricio Mazón looks at the bloody incidents that erupted in Los Angeles during June, 1943. They have previously been portrayed only as dangerous conflagrations whose psychological roots have been overlooked or misunderstood, even by informed observers. Among these the author cites Carey McWilliams, Octavio Paz, and Luis Valdez, all of whom unsuccessfully sought to fathom what actually happened. Mazón continues the scholarly and emotional debate, but on a totally different level.

During World War II, disaffected servicemen rebelled against an imagined enemy within the country—those young Mexican Americans whose “drape shape” baggy coats and trousers announced a personal rebellion against the ghetto conditions in which they lived. The attacking military personnel, on the other hand, revealed a xenophobia provoked by wartime hysteria and fueled by rumors of saboteurs lurking in the shadows of American society. Dark-skinned Mexican-Americans came to resemble the enemy Japanese in the minds of misguided bigots. Recruits headed for the Pacific naively confused the two races, at least in an unconscious transference relationship. Mazón examines the complicated psychodynamics that characterized the interaction of two fright-

ened groups of people caught in the grip of mutual incomprehension.

The cartoonist Al Capp introduced his readers, ironically and facetiously, to a menacing comic-strip character named “Zoot Suit Yokum.” Capp played upon the interchangeability of fantasy and reality. His lampooning of a national zoot-suit menace, however, was not far off the mark; for local authorities at Los Angeles sought to clamp down upon the sale of such clothing, which came to represent in the popular mind a uniform of sorts worn by the swarthy street-wise enemies of the social order, which included the military, some women’s clubs, and other establishment forces.

Mazón argues persuasively that the young recruits who attacked the zoot-suiters acted out their anxieties unconsciously. Their violence over a period of ten days (June 3–13, 1943) escalated to the level of symbolic events, for no one was killed. He focuses on what most historians, untrained as they are in psychiatry, usually deny—the latent unconscious and irrational assumptions and distortions of aggressors. His approach is similar to the diagnostic treatment of patients with hysterical personalities. The specialized psychoanalytic terminology will confuse some readers, alas.

The author sees his book as “an alternative to studies that have understood the riots within a more literal, traditional, and manifest context.” He has benefited also from previously unavailable Navy and Army accounts that serve to “broaden the interpretation of the riots beyond the confines of the barrio.” (p. xiii)

Students of California’s history, and the historical profession in general, should be grateful that Professor Mazón sought and received psychoanalytic training in an accredited institute. This greatly helped him to produce this important contribution toward analyzing a complex event never before fully understood. □

# *Iron Men: California’s Industrial Pioneers, Peter, James and Michael Donohue.*

By Richard Dillon. (Point Richmond: Candela Press, 1984, xiv, 334 pp., \$30.00 cloth.)

Reviewed by Ferol Egan, Professor of Humanities, The Fromm Institute, University of San Francisco, and author of *Frémont: Explorer for a Restless Nation and other books about the American West*.

Richard Dillon’s *Iron Men* is a fascinating study that captures both the biography of the Donohue brothers and the history of those changing years between 1849 and the turn of the 20th century. In sharp detail, this unusual book shows how the isolated frontier of the Pacific Coast was dependent upon the East for its machinery, locomotives and ships until men such as the Donohues brought industrial independence to the area with skills learned elsewhere. Their story is narrated in a highly readable, scholarly volume that should be offered to the general reader and not be limited to collectors of limited editions.

The Bay Area owes much to these hardworking Irish immigrants who came from Scotland after their family had moved to Glasgow “. . . to escape persecution in their homeland.” For in the years between 1798 and 1804, “. . . the Donohues were joined by 30,000 Irish fleeing to Scotland for a better chance to gain a livelihood.” Most of all, the Donohues were avoiding the increasing persecution of Catholics that followed the Wolfe Tone rebellion of 1798. Still, they were not content to remain in Scotland, for they had the itch to find a better life in the United States. By the 1830’s they had crossed the Atlantic and settled at first in Matteawan, New York. Here they worked as laborers in a cotton factory and on local farms. But these ambitious Irishmen were not content with this station in life. In 1838, they



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*The Donohue brothers' Union Iron Works, San Francisco.*

moved to the Passic Valley in New Jersey. Here, they were introduced to the iron trade and took to it as though they had been born for it.

The Donohue brothers learned many aspects of the iron trade as they worked at pattern-making, machine-tooling, and the building of locomotives. But during this period of their lives, Michael took fourteen months away from the iron trade to sign on as a seaman and sail "... down the Atlantic coast to the West Indies, then to Rio de Janeiro, and from Brazil back to the Antilles, calling at Barbados." This stint as a merchant seaman took the wanderlust out of him, and upon his return, he settled down to learn more about the iron trade.

When Mary O'Kane Donohue (their mother) died in Paterson, New Jersey, in the early 1840's, it seemed as though the glue which held the brothers together melted. For a time they drifted in different directions. Michael went to Cincinnati where he worked at the molder's trade and then became a journeyman machinist. James traveled to New Orleans where he worked as a steamboat engineer on Lake Pontchartrain for a time, then made his way to Mobile, Alabama, where he worked in a boiler shop. As for Peter, he moved to New York City where he helped construct the first steam warship for the Peruvian Navy.

With the outbreak of the Mexican War, Michael enlisted and rose to the rank of sergeant after the hard-fought Battle of Monterrey. While Michael was under

fire, brother James' steamer was chartered as a troop ship to carry soldiers to Brazos Santiago, and he was appointed "... to start a Government foundry and machine shop at the mouth of the Rio Grande, although only 22 years old." Meanwhile, Peter was given the position of assistant engineer aboard the Peruvian steam warship he had helped build, and he sailed aboard the *Rimac* all the way around the Horn of Peru in 1848. The wandering Irishmen had come a long way since their boyhood days in Scotland, and their ramblings in Texas, Mexico and Peru were but a taste of what the future held for these talented, hard-working brothers.

Then in one of those implausible tricks of fate, all three brothers set off for California with bad cases of gold fever once the news of discovery became widely known. Peter arrived first as he caught passage aboard the three-masted, wooden sidewheeler *Oregon* when the vessel sailed from its stop at Callao, Peru. By April 1, 1849, he was standing on the deck when the *Oregon* sailed into San Francisco Bay. James and Michael took longer to get to California by different routes. Apparently, James went overland through part of Texas and Northern Mexico, but the remainder of his journey is vague. Michael crossed Mexico from Brazos Santiago to San Blas where he managed to book passage aboard the *Oregon* as she made her next California voyage.

True to their form, the brothers found each other through news of a James

Donohue Ironshop (or Blacksmith Shop) that James opened in San Francisco. Ultimately, the brothers opened the Union Iron Works which was to become Bethlehem, then Todd Shipyard on San Francisco's south waterfront; here they built machinery, locomotives, and ships. For the Donohues gold was not to be found in the streams of the Mother Lode nor in deep mines that traced veins of gold along quartz ledges beneath the red clay soil. Their "gold" was iron, and it earned them the fortune to become pioneers in such fields as a gas company that fueled the street lights of San Francisco and later became part of today's Pacific Gas & Electric Company, but their importance to the Bay Area did not stop here. Peter, the leader of the brothers, had chosen the motto *Labor Omnia Vincit* (Labor Conquers All), and the trio proved that it did.

They not only built quartz mills for the Mother Lode, but also repaired and built ships at their San Francisco shipyard. Then Peter became fascinated with railroads, and he constructed both the San Francisco & San Jose Railroad, and the San Francisco & North Pacific Railroad in an effort to tie the Bay Area together in a railroad system that would provide good freight and passenger service.

In *Iron Men*, Richard Dillon brings to life the driving force that pushed the Donohues, lifting them from a childhood of poverty in Scotland to an adulthood of power and wealth in California. For here, these Irish immigrants toiled in iron to build a lasting place for themselves as industrial pioneers who freed California from dependence upon the factories of the Eastern Seaboard. All of this was accomplished despite an openly expressed prejudice against the Irish. For the Donohues knew that Labor conquers All; and as Dillon has shown in this intriguing biographical history, the Donohues not only prevailed in the face of adversity, they thrived on it. Truly, they deserved to be called the Iron Men. □



## A TRIBUTE TO MARGARET MURDOCK (1894–1985)

Margaret E. Murdock, who died on June 10, twelve days before her ninety-first birthday, was for many years a highly valued volunteer in the California Historical Society Library in San Francisco. As a library volunteer, she held the position of Ephemera Librarian in the Edward C. Kemble Collections on Western Printing and Publishing, a unique collection housed on the fourth floor of Schubert Hall Library.

As the daughter of Charles A. Murdock, a distinguished commercial printer in San Francisco, Miss Murdock developed her interest in printing early in life. She assisted her father in the 1920s when he published his reminiscences, *A Backward Glance at Eighty*, and did much of the research for his "History of Printing in San Francisco," a long series of articles that appeared in *Pacific Printer and Publisher*. Miss Murdock told an oral history interviewer during the 1970s that she was especially delighted by her father's association with *The Lark*, a little magazine published from 1895 to 1897 by a group of aesthetes known as "Les Jeunes" and printed by Murdock.

A native San Franciscan whose grandparents had come to California during the Gold Rush, Miss Murdock moved to the East Bay with her family after the Earthquake and Fire of 1906. In 1918 she graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in economics. After receiving a master's degree in education, she worked as a credentials counselor in the University's School of Education until retiring in 1959.



Simultaneously, she pursued a remarkable career that spanned six decades as assistant University carillonist. She began playing semi-weekly concerts on the Sather Tower bells in 1923. When the number of bells was increased from twelve to forty-eight in 1972, a commemorative plaque was placed on the keyboard to name it in her honor. She continued to climb the stairs of the campanile to pound the levers controlling the bells until 1983, when she decided to retire from this musically rewarding but physically demanding position.

When asked by an interviewer if ringing bells for so many years had affected her hearing, she responded, "How's that?"

"Your hearing, has it affected your hearing?"

"Oh no," she replied with an elfish grin, "not in the least."

As a tribute to Miss Murdock's outstanding service to the University, on Charter Day in 1978 she was given the Berkeley Citation, the most prestigious award conferred by the University of California. In making the presentation, Chancellor Albert Bowker called Miss Murdock the "Empress of Tintinnabulation." She, of course, had to rush off to the campanile to ring the bells that would signal the closing of the day's festivities.

Margaret Murdock's remarkable dedication and intelligence—spiced with a spirited wit—will be long remembered by the staff of the California Historical Society and by the community to which she so generously contributed.

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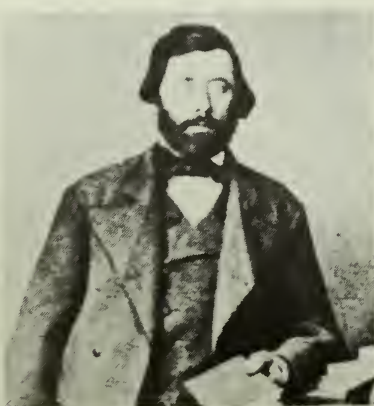
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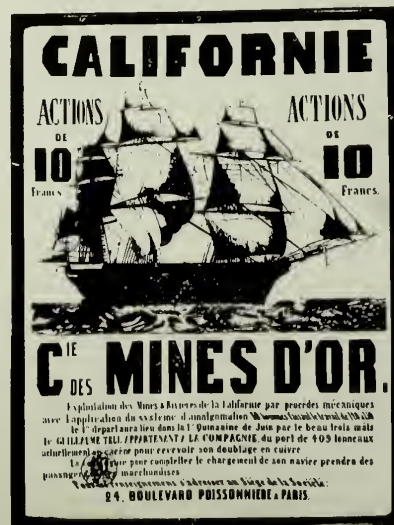
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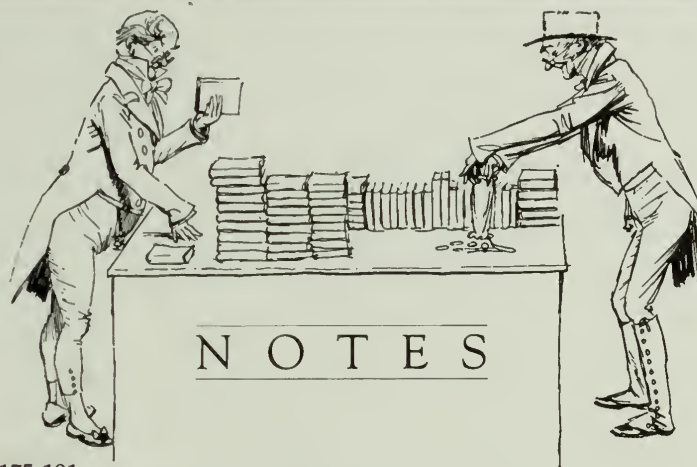
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24. *The Regulation of the Fruit and Vegetables*, p. 7.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 67. Regulation of the industry was becoming more feasible as new technology made large, concentrated labor pools necessary, putting small rural canneries scattered around the countryside out of business. For a discussion of the new technologies, see Peter Philips, "Towards a New Theory of Wage Structure: The Evolution of Wages in the California Canneries, 1870 to the Present" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1979), p. 151.
27. Martin Brown, "A Historical Economics Analysis of the Wage Structure of the California Fruit and Vegetable Canning Industry" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1981), p. 376. Brown's analysis of the role of the Industrial Welfare Commission has influenced the direction of my paper.
28. Ralph Edward Shaffer, "Radicalism in California, 1869-1929" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1962), p. 221.
29. Philip S. Foner, *The Industrial Workers of the World, 1905-1917* (New York: International Publishers, 1965), p. 127.
30. Linda Lewis Toomi, *Farm Labor Organizing, 1905-1967* (New York: National Advisory Committee of Farm Labor, 1967), p. 14.
31. Shaffer, pp. 220-235. See Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All, A History of the IWW* (New York: The New York Times Book Co., 1969) for a complete treatment of the IWW. Other interesting works include Joyce L. Kornblug, ed., *Rebel Voices, An IWW Anthology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965) and Carleton Parker, *The Casual Laborer and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920). Parker was the Executive Secretary of the California Commission of Immigration and Housing in 1914 and investigated IWW activities in the state. He was also a sociologist and wrote a psychological interpretation of the IWW.
32. Kessler-Harris, p. 155.
33. *San Jose Mercury Herald*, July 17, 1917.

34. Robert Knight, *Industrial Relations in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1900-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), p. 335.
35. *San Francisco Examiner*, July 29, 1917.
36. *La Voce del Popolo*, August 3, 1917.
37. *San Francisco Examiner*, July 23, 1917.
38. Knight, p. 334.
39. *San Francisco Examiner*, July 24, 1917. Some of these canneries had recently merged into the California Packing Corporation, Del Monte, but their names had not changed.
40. *Ibid.*, July 25, 1917; *L'Italia*, July 28, 1917.
41. *San Jose Mercury Herald*, July 28, 1917.
42. Samuel F. Vitone, "Community, Identity, and Schools: Educational Experiences of Italians in San Francisco from the Gold Rush to the Second World War" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1981), p. 142.
43. *La Voce del Popolo*, August 3, 1917.
44. *Ibid.*, July 31, 1917.
45. *L'Italia*, July 28, 1917.
46. *Ibid.*, July 27, 1917.
47. *Ibid.*, April 20, 1903; June 19, 1909.
48. *San Francisco Examiner*, July 27, 1917.
49. *La Voce del Popolo*, July 28, 1917.
50. Paul L. Murphy, *World War I and the Origins of Civil Liberties in the United States* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979), p. 87.
51. *The World*, August 10, 1917. The poem was entitled, "A Tribute Dedicated to San Jose Merchants, Canners and Society Dames," and had three other stanzas.
52. Simon Lubin Papers, Boxes on Commission of Immigration and Housing (hereafter cited as CCIH) and Western Governors, Bancroft Library. In Gregory's telegram it is unclear to which "Department" he is referring.
53. Simon Lubin Papers, CCIH, Bancroft Library.
54. *L'Italia*, July 28, 1917.
55. *San Jose Mercury Herald*, August 8, 1917; *La Voce del Popolo*, July 28, 1917.
56. *La Voce del Popolo*, July 31, 1917.
57. *L'Italia*, July 31, 1917.
58. *San Francisco Examiner*, July 28, 1917.
59. *La Voce del Popolo*, July 30, 1917.
60. *San Jose Mercury Herald*, July 28, 1917.
61. *San Francisco Examiner*, August 1, 1917.
62. *Labor Clarion*, August 17, 1917.
63. *Tri-City Labor Review*, August 1, 1917.
64. *The World*, August 3, 1917.
65. Brown, p. 375.
66. *San Francisco Examiner*, August 1, 1917.

67. *Labor Clarion*, July 21, 1917.
68. *Ibid.*, April 13, 1917.
69. *Tri-City Labor Review*, July 27, 1917.
70. Daniel, p. 98.
71. J. Vance Thompson to George Bell, May 30, 1917, Simon Lubin Papers, CCIH, Bancroft Library.
72. *Ibid.*, June 18, 1917.
73. *Ibid.*, March 26, 1917.
74. *Ibid.*
75. J.V. Thompson, Notes on IWW Activities, n.d., Simon Lubin Papers, CCIH, Bancroft Library.
76. J.V. Thompson, Notes on Industrial Situation, August 7, 1917; Thompson, Brief Report of IWW Situation in California at Present Date, July 18, 1917, Simon Lubin Papers, CCIH, Bancroft Library.
77. Foner, pp. 415-434.
78. Kenneth Smith, "Industrial Relations in the California Fruit and Vegetable Canning Industry" (M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1949), pp. 103-108.
79. *Del Monte Activities*, July 1918, Del Monte Archives.
80. *The Lug Box*, September 1919, Del Monte Archives.
81. *Ibid.*, July 1919.

## Scharnhorst, Making Her Fame, pp. 192-201.

1. [Emma N. Ireland], *Nation*, 8 June 1899, p. 443.
2. *American Quarterly*, 8 (Spring 1956), 39.
3. *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1935), p. 182. Hereafter cited as *Living*. Examples of Gilman's rejection of the term "feminist" to describe herself may be found in *Forerunner*, 4 (February 1913), 36; *Visual Review*, 1 (1926), 2; Ann J. Lane, introduction to *The Charlotte Perkins Gilman Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), p. xiv.
4. See Arthur Lipow, *Authoritarian Socialism in America: Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1982). Bellamy's book, titled in full *Looking Backward 2000-1887*, was re-issued by Houghton Mifflin in 1966. Little has been written on Gilman's career as a Nationalist since California labor leader Eugene Hough observed in 1897 that she "came into the field of battle by way of what is known as the 'Nationalist movement'" (*American Fabian*, 2 (January 1897), 12). Even Mary Hill's biography, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: The Making of a Radical Feminist 1860-1896* (Philadelphia: Tem-

ple University Press, 1980) contains factual errors and glosses over details in recounting the Nationalist phase of Gilman's career.

5. These figures are contained in the *Nationalist*, 1 (1889), 127; 2 (1890), 206f, 274f; and 3 (1890), 289f.
6. *Living*, p. 122.
7. *New Nation*, 25 April 1891, p. 203.
8. "Women and Nationalism," *New Nation*, 28 March 1891, p. 139.
9. Stetson to Martha Luther Lane, 15 April 1890, Rhode Island Historical Society, hereafter cited as RIHS.
10. Stetson to Martha Luther Lane, 15 March 1890, RIHS.
11. "Record of Manuscripts, Beginning March 1, 1890," vol. 23, Charlotte Perkins Gilman Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, hereafter cited as CPG Papers.
12. *Nationalist*, 2 (April 1890), p. 113; rpt. in *In This Our World* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Co., 1898), pp. 95-100.
13. "Nationalism vs. Individualism," *California Nationalist*, 3 May 1890, p. 9; and "Altering Human Nature," 10 May 1890, p. 10.
14. "The Two Armies," *Weekly Nationalist*, 28 June 1890, p. 6. Like Bellamy, Stetson advocated the creation of an "industrial army" in which individualism is sacrificed to the organization: "The industrial army would imply discipline, and temporary and willing subjection." She would strike the same authoritarian note often during her career. For example, she favored forced sterilization of the "unfit" (*Herland* [New York: Pantheon, 1979], p. 69; and "Birth Control, Religion, and the Unfit," *Nation*, 27 January 1932, pp. 108-109). She proposed compulsory "enlistment" of most blacks in a CCC-like "army" similar to the industrial army of Nationalism ("A Suggestion on the Negro Problem," *American Journal of Sociology*, 14 [July 1908], 78-85).
15. "The Love Story," *Pacific Monthly*, 2 (September 1880), 176-77; "Why Nature Laughs," 2 (November 1890), 184; "Are Women Better Than Men?" 3 (January 1891), 9-11; "Another Conservative," 3 (March 1891), 105-106; "A Walk for Two," 3 (May 1891), 194-198; "My Fellow Traveller," 3 (June-July 1891), 237-241.
16. "Record of Manuscripts," CPG Papers, vol. 23.
17. Quoted in *Living*, p. 113; CPG Papers, folder 120.
18. Stetson to W.D. Howells, 16 June 1890, Houghton Library, Harvard



- University.
19. *Living*, pp. 113, 129.
20. CPG Papers, folder 36.
21. *New England Magazine*, NS 3 (September 1890), 134-135.
22. *Cosmopolitan*, 10 (January 1891), 272.
23. *Nationalist*, 3 (February 1891), 491.
24. *American Journal of Sociology*, 2 (May 1897), 815.
25. CPG Papers, folder 298.
26. CPG Papers, vol. 29.
27. *Living*, p. 122.
28. CPG Papers, folder 163. The writing and delivery of this lecture are chronicled in CPG Papers, folders 163 and 29 and in a letter to Martha Luther Lane, 27 July 1890 (RIHS).
29. *Weekly Nationalist*, 21 June 1890, p. 6.
30. Stetson to Martha Luther Lane, 27 July 1890, RIHS; *Weekly Nationalist*, 12 July 1890, p. 5.
31. Harriet Howe, "Charlotte Perkins Gilman—As I Knew Her," *Equal Rights*, 5 September 1936, p. 211.
32. *Weekly Nationalist*, 26 July 1890, pp. 4-5. See entry for 22 July 1890 in the "Record of Manuscripts," CPG Papers, vol. 23. The only known copies of this tract are located in the CPG Papers, folders 168 and 268.
33. CPG Papers, folders 163-165. See also the *New Nation*, 7 February 1891, p. 34; 28 February 1891, p. 83; 14 March 1891, p. 115; 28 March 1891, p. 147; 25 April 1891, p. 211.
34. CPG Papers, folder 168.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 122, 123. See also Stetson's diaries for 2 November 1890, 11 January and 7 November 1891 (CPG Papers, vol. 30-31).
36. "An Unmarried Child," CPG Papers, folders 168-169.
37. CPG Papers, folder 164.
38. "Social, Cosmetic and Human Life," CPG Papers, folder 165. By prescribing monogamy as the present ideal, Stetson held open the possibility that the evolution of the species would one day permit a wider range of ideal relationships, a view shared by her aunt Isabella Beecher Hooker.
39. "Nationalism and the Virtues," CPG Papers, folder 163.
40. Stetson to Martha Luther Lane, 27 July 1890, RIHS.
41. Los Angeles *Porcupine*, 1 January 1891. CPG Papers, oversize vol. 3.
42. "News from the Clubs," *New Nation*, *passim*. See especially 14 March 1891, p. 115; and 25 April 1891, p. 211. See also *New Nation*, 6 June 1891, p. 307, 18 April 1891, p. 195, and 9 May 1891, p. 241.
43. *Living*, pp. 129-130; CPG Papers, vol. 30.
44. CPG Papers, vol. 30.
45. Diary for 18 December 1891, CPG Papers, vol. 30, Diary for 4 January 1892, CPG Papers, vol. 31.
46. *New Nation*, 23 January 1892, p. 58.
47. Diary for 15 January 1892, CPG Papers, vol. 31; CPG Papers, folder 168.
48. Stetson to Edwin Markham, 19 January 1892, Wagner College.
49. *Forerunner*, 2 (February 1911), 31-36.
50. CPG Papers, vol. 31.
51. Entry for 16 September 1890, "Record of Manuscripts," CPG Papers, vol. 23; *New England Magazine*, NS 3 (December 1890), 543.
52. *Life*, 4 February 1892, p. 68; *Outlook*, 4 April 1896, p. 647.
53. Bellamy to Stetson, 19 February 1891, CPG Papers, folder 137.
54. In addition to "The Survival of the Fittest," Stetson's poems in the *New Nation* are as follows: "What's That?" 10 October 1891, p. 584; "The Old-Time Wail," 23 January 1892, p. 53; "The Dead Level," 9 April 1892, p. 228; "The Cart Before the Horse," 21 May 1892, p. 325; "The Poor Ye Have Always With You," 4 June 1892, p. 356; "The Amoeboid Cell," 30 July 1892, p. 484; "The Nation," 5 November 1892, p. 664; "Free Land is Not Enough," 22 April 1893, p. 204; and "Waste," 6 January 1894, p. 4.
55. Bellamy to Stetson, 14 January 1894, CPG Papers, folder 137.
56. *Impress*, 1 (April 1894), 6.
57. Howe, p. 211. See also Howe's critique of sexism in the clubs in the *California Nationalist*, 15 March 1890, p. 4.
58. CPG Papers, vol. 31.
59. *Boston Globe*, 17 December 1892 (clipping in CPG Papers, folder 282). Reprints appeared in *San Francisco Examiner*, 20 December 1892 and *Philadelphia Press*, 24 December 1892 (clippings in CPG Papers, folder 282).
60. *Boston Herald*, 20 December 1892 (clipping in CPG Papers, folder 282).
61. *New Nation*, 24 June 1893, p. 315; 23 September 1893, p. 435.
62. See "Socialism and Morality," dated 16 January 1893 (CPG Papers, folder 170).
63. Diary for 15 April and 20 April 1893, CPG Papers, vol. 32; "She Who Is To Come," folder 253.
64. Diary for 8 February 1893, CPG Papers, vol. 32. For the favorable response of the Nationalists to Howells' Altruistic romance, see the *New Nation*, 26 November 1892, pp. 701-702; and 14 October 1893, p. 458.
65. *Impress*, 1 (November 1893), 2; and 1 (December 1893), 1. CPG Papers, vol. 2.
66. *Impress*, 5 January 1895, pp. 4-5 and *Impress*, 12 January 1895, p. 3. CPG Papers, vol. 2. As late as 1907, Gilman explained that *Looking Backward* had enjoyed enormous popularity because it had "scarce a feature beyond the grasp of the average citizen" (*Times*, 1 [January 1907], 215).
67. *Impress*, 19 January 1895, p. 2. CPG Papers, vol. 2.
68. Noted in *American Fabian*, 2 (December 1896), 4. CPG Papers, vol. 3, and in Diary for 7 June 1898, CPG Papers, vol. 38.
69. *Women and Economics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 242-244; *The Home* (New York: McClure, Phillips, 1903), pp. 132-133. See also Dolores Hayden, "Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the Kitchenless House," *Radical History Review*, 21 (Fall 1979), 227-229.
70. *Impress*, 1 (November 1893), 2.
71. *His Religion and Hers* (New York: Century Co., 1923), p. 27.
72. *Living*, pp. 122-124, 129-131.

# Wollenberg, Usable History, pp. 202-209.

1. The most convenient source of demographic information on California is James Fay, Anne G. Lipow and Stephanie Fay eds., *California Almanac* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1984), sections 1-3.
2. *Ibid.*; "The Optimists: A Survey of California's Economy" *The Economist* (May 19-25, 1984) survey section 1-22.
3. Bernard R. Gifford, *The Good School of Education: Linking Knowledge, Teaching and Learning* (Berkeley: Graduate School of Education, University of California, 1984) 72; Robert Lindsey, "Los Angeles" *New York Times Magazine* (July 22, 1984) 28-31, 62-67.
4. For state-wide history guidelines in the schools see, California State Department of Education, *California Framework for History-Social Studies in the K-12 Program* (Sacramento, 1981) and "History-Social Sciences SB-813 Model Curriculum Standards" (draft), (Sacramento, 1984).
5. J.S. Holliday, "Resources for Teaching California History" (presentation at Clio Conference, Berkeley: August, 1984). For a critique of public school California History texts see, Richard DeLuca "In Search of the Real California: History in the Fourth Grade Textbook" (prepared for the Clio Conference, Berkeley: August, 1984).
6. For examples of the treatment of mi-

norities in late 1960s and early 1970s scholarship, see Roger Daniels and Spencer C. Olin eds., *Racism in California: A Reader on the History of Oppression* (New York: MacMillan, 1972); George E. Frakes and Curtis B. Solberg, *Minorities in California* (New York: Random House, 1971); Robert F. Heizer and Alan J. Almquist, *The Other Californians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Anne Loftis, *California: Where the Twain Did Meet* (New York: MacMillan, 1973); Charles Wollenberg ed., *Ethnic Conflict in California History* (Los Angeles: Tinnon-Brown, 1970) and Roger Olmsted and Charles Wollenberg eds., *Neither Separate Nor Equal* (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1971). For a critique of such scholarship see, Lawrence B. DeGraaf, "Recognition, Racism and Reflections on the Writings of Western Black History" *Pacific Historical Review* (February, 1975) 22-51. Chicano historians have pioneered in a more sophisticated coverage of California ethnic experience. See, Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979) and Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

7. Lou Cannon, "The Winning of the East" *California Magazine* (August, 1984) 106-112.
8. James Houston, *Californians* (New York: Knopf, 1982) 272.
9. For discussions of the use of state and local history in the schools see, Fay Metcalf and Matthew Downey, *Using Local Sources in the Classroom* (Nashville: American Society for State and Local History, 1982) and Karen Jorgensen-Esmaili, "Another Look at Community History" (prepared for the Clio Conference, Berkeley: August, 1984).

#### Leung, When a Haircut Was a Luxury, pp. 210-217.

1. Even in the few published accounts of the Delta's history the lives of these sojourners have appeared only in passing. Joseph McGowan's *History of the Sacramento Valley* (New York: Lewis, 1961), for example, chronicles the life of only one Chinese resident, a Weaverville merchant named Moon Lee. In *Stories of*

*the Sacramento Delta* (n.p.: n.p., 1952), Arthur Allen writes with descriptive familiarity about Lum Bunn Fong, the owner of a large pear orchard in Walnut Grove, and Robert Walters' guidebook, *Cruising the California Delta* (San Francisco: M. Freeman, 1972), tells the story of Ping Lee, the owner of the "Big Store." J.W. Wooldridge's *History of the Sacramento Valley, California* (Chicago: Pioneer, 1931) includes some information on Jang Tai, a merchant from Courtland. The best known accounts appear in Earle Stanley Gardner's *Drifting Down the Delta* (New York: Morrow, 1969) and *Gypsy Days on the Delta* (New York: Morrow, 1967) and in Jean Rossi's "Lee Bing, Founder of California's Historical Town of Locke" (*The Pacific Historian* 20:4, 1976). However, most of the Chinese who receive attention in these accounts were successful merchants or men with sufficient English to communicate easily with American researchers. In contrast, the anonymous Chinese farm laborers have been largely ignored. Studies such as George Chu's "Chinatowns in the Delta: The Chinese in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, 1870-1960" (*California Historical Society Quarterly* 49:1, March 1970) tell the collective history of Chinese farm laborers in the Delta but do not describe individual lives. Even the late historian A.I. Dickman, who collected oral histories from Delta pioneers to record knowledge he believed was disappearing rapidly, was unable to speak Chinese and did not include the recollections of Chinese farm laborers in his study. *My One Day, One Dollar* includes the life stories of a number of Chinese agricultural workers.

2. Tien-lu Li, *Congressional Policy of Chinese Immigration* (Nashville: Methodist Episcopal Church, 1916), pp. 61, 97. Also Elizabeth Bates, "The Chinese Through an Official Window," *Overland Monthly*, 22, second series (1893), p. 143.
3. Betty Lee Sung, *A Survey of Chinese-American Manpower and Employment* (New York: Praeger, 1976), p. 16; Thomas W. Chinn, ed., *A History of the Chinese in California* (San Francisco: Chinese Historical Society of America, 1969), p. 15; Rose Hum Lee, *The Chinese in the United States of America* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong

University Press, 1960), p. 301.

4. Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim and Judy Yung, *Island* (San Francisco: Hoc Doi, 1980), pp. 8ff.
5. Chu, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
6. Sally Ooms, "The Effects of Change and Intervention on the Chinese Town of Locke, California" Unpublished thesis for the degree of Bachelor of Public Administration, University of San Francisco, 1980.
7. "Delta Historic Resources," *Delta Plan Technical Supplement*. Sacramento: Delta Advisory Planning Council, 1976, pp. 1-7.
8. Interviews with Jack Chew (1981), Jang Po (1980), and Sun Sam (1980).

#### Conlin, Eating on the Rush, pp. 218-225.

1. Richard A. Dwyer and Richard E. Lingenfelter, *The Songs of the Gold Rush* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 41.
2. This is a subject I address in *Bacon, Beans, and Galantine Truffles: Food in the Gold Rush and on the Western Mining Frontier*, to be published by the University of Nevada Press this year and in which the present essay is also a chapter.
3. See the Articles of Association in J.S. Holliday, *The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), pp. 461-463; Octavius T. Howe, *Argonauts of '49: History and Adventures of the Emigrant Companies from Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923), pp. 4-5.
4. Very occasionally a professional cook hired expressly for his trade appears. For example, see Sandra L. Myles, *Ho for the Goldfields* (San Marino, California: Huntington Library Press, 1981), pp. 43-44 and Lucy Rutledge Cooke, *Crossing the Plains in 1852: Narrative of a Trip from Iowa to the Land of Gold* (Modesto: privately published, 1923), p. 61.
5. William Swain, letter to George Swain, May 6, 1849, Holliday, *The World*, p. 102.
6. John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men of the Overland Trail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), Table AI-10, p. 194.
7. Faragher, *Men and Women*, pp. 34, 39.
8. Faragher, *Men and Women*, Table AI-11, p. 195. However, the family-size mess as the medium by which to organize the preparation and taking



- of meals had proved its utility in other ways and, on the trail of 1849, remained the norm.
9. Note, however, that some overland companies shunned beans on the most relaxed of days because they believed that beans caused the cholera, then pandemic and the chief killer on the road to California. See Georgia Willis Read, "Diseases, Drugs and Doctors on the Oregon-California Trail in the Gold Rush Years," *Missouri Historical Review* (October 1943), pp. 260-277.
  10. Oliver Goldsmith, "Overland in Forty-Nine: The Recollections of a Wolverine Ranger," (Detroit: 1896), p. 23.
  11. Carpenter, "A Trip," June 22, 1857, in Myres, *Ho*, p. 114.
  12. Carpenter, "A Trip," June 12, 1857, in Myres, *Ho*, p. 104.
  13. Wellman Packard and Greenberry Larison, *Early Emigrants to California* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1928), pp. 6-7.
  14. John King, letter, June 16, 1850, in his *Diary*, YU Library; Isaac J. Wistar, *Autobiography*, (Philadelphia: 1914); Holliday, *The World*, pp. 150-151.
  15. Franklin Langworthy, June 27, 1850, *Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines: Or a Diary Kept Upon the Overland Route to California* (Ogdenburg, New York: privately published, 1955).
  16. Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain), *Roughing It* (New York: Harper, 1913 ed.), p. 16.
  17. Noah Brooks, "The Plains Across," *Century Magazine* (1902), p. 805; Carpenter, "A Trip," June 22, 1857, pp. 114-115.
  18. Mary S. Bailey, "Journal," June 1 and 24, 1852, in Myres, *Ho*, pp. 57, 66; Andrew J. McClure, *The Diary of Andrew J. McClure*, (Eugene: Lane County Pioneer Historical Society, 1959), pp. 9, 53; Cecilia Emily McMillin Adams, "Crossing the Plains in 1852," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (1904), pp. 292-321; Charles L. Camp, ed., *James Clyman, Frontiersman: The Adventures of a Trapper and Covered Wagon Emigrant as Told in His Own Reminiscences and Diaries* (Portland, Oregon: Cham-poe Press, 1960), p. 71.
  19. Lucy Rutledge Cooke, *Crossing the Plains in 1852: Narrative of a Trip from Iowa to the Land of Gold* (Modesto, California: privately published, 1923), p. 61; Catherine Haun, "A Woman's Trip Across the Plains in 1849," manuscript in HEH Library, p. 18; Rebecca Katcham, "From Ithaca to Clatsop Plains," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* (1961), p. 275; William S. Greever, *The Bonanza West: The Story of the Western Mining Rushes, 1848-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 14.
  20. Noah Brooks, "The Plains Across," *Century Magazine* (1902), p. 805.
  21. John A. Johnson, "Letters to His Wife," April 1, 22, 1849; Faragher, *Men and Women*, pp. 81-82.
  22. Johnson, "Letters," April 29, May 3, 1849.
  23. Johnson, "Letters," May 10, 1849.
  24. James Lyne, letter to his wife, May 4, 1849; Holliday, *The World*, pp. 97-98.
  25. Carpenter, "A Trip," July 4, 1857; Myres, *Ho*, pp. 127-128.
  26. *Ibid.*, June 22 and September 5, 1857 in Myres, *Ho*, p. 114-115, 171.
  27. See, e.g., Catherine Haun, "A Woman's Trip Across the Plains in 1849," HEH Library, p. 18; Sabrina Swain, letters to William Swain, May 27 and July 26, 1849; Holliday, *The World*, pp. 138, 195.
  28. Swain, letter to his mother, May 29, 1849, in Holliday, *The World*, p. 129.
  29. *Ibid.*, May 12, 22; June 20; August 16, 24, 1849; Holliday, *The World*, pp. 105, 123, 129, 155, 215, 219. Also see David M. Potter, ed., *Trail to California: The Overland Journey of Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), July 25, 1849.
  30. Thomas O. Clark, ed., *Gold Rush Diary: Being the Journal of Elisha Douglas Perkins on the Overland Trail* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), June 16, 1849; Howe, *Argonauts of 'Forty-Nine*, *passim*.
  31. Prentice Mulford, "Camp," *Overland Monthly* (May 1871) in Marvin Lewis, ed., *The Mining Frontier: Contemporary Accounts from the American West in the Nineteenth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), pp. 30, 32. The verse is from the Frazer River diggings, quoted in *Hutchings Magazine* (September 1959), p. 37. See also Richard Van Orman, *A Room for the Night: Hotels of the Old West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 110.
  32. William R. Balch, *The Mines, Miners, and Mining Interests in the United States in 1882* (Philadelphia: The Mining Industrial Publishing Bureau, 1882), 791. Also see Caughey, *Gold Rush*, p. 179.
  33. M.M. Matthews, *Ten Years in Nevada* (Buffalo: Baker, Jones, and Company, 1880), p. 171; Joan Margo, "The Food Supply Problem of the California Gold Miners," M.A. Thesis, University of California, n.d., H.H. Bancroft Library.
  34. Edwin F. Bean, *Bean's History and Directory of Nevada County, California* (Nevada City: Daily Gazette Book and Job Office, 1867), p. 392; Louise A.K.S. Clapper, *California in 1851: The Letters of Dame Shirley* (San Francisco: 1933) I, p. 27.
  35. The menu is in the archives of the Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco. The gourmandise of the western miners is the subject of my "Beans, Bacon, and Galantine Truffles: The Food of the Western Miners," *Arizona and the West* (Spring 1981), pp. 29-51. There are some observations on the peculiar appeal of oysters to the western miners in my "Consider the Oyster," *American Heritage* (February-March 1980), p. 65 ff. I will expand on both topics in the title noted above, fn. 2.
- Lewis, W.H. Weeks, pp. 226-229.**
1. W.H. Weeks, "Building the School," *Architect and Engineer*, June 1911, pp. 57-63.
  2. W.H. Weeks, "Some Notes on School Planning," *Architect and Engineer*, May 1915, p. 63.
  3. *American City*, (November 1920), p. 468.
  4. W.H. Weeks, "Ramps versus Stairs for School Buildings," *American School Board Journal*, May 1935, pp. 38-39.
  5. *San Jose Mercury Herald*, April 30, 1936.

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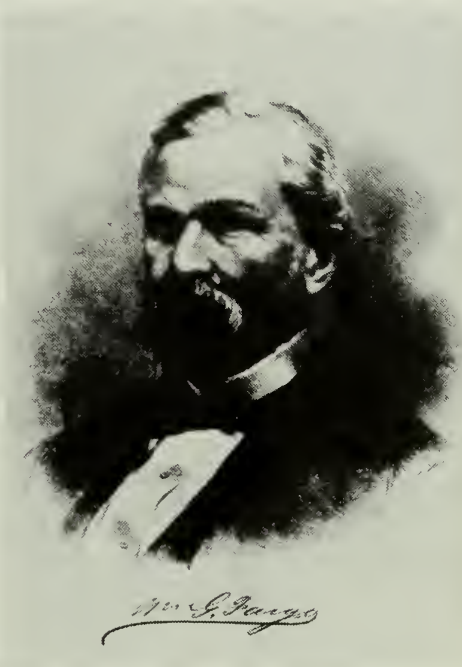
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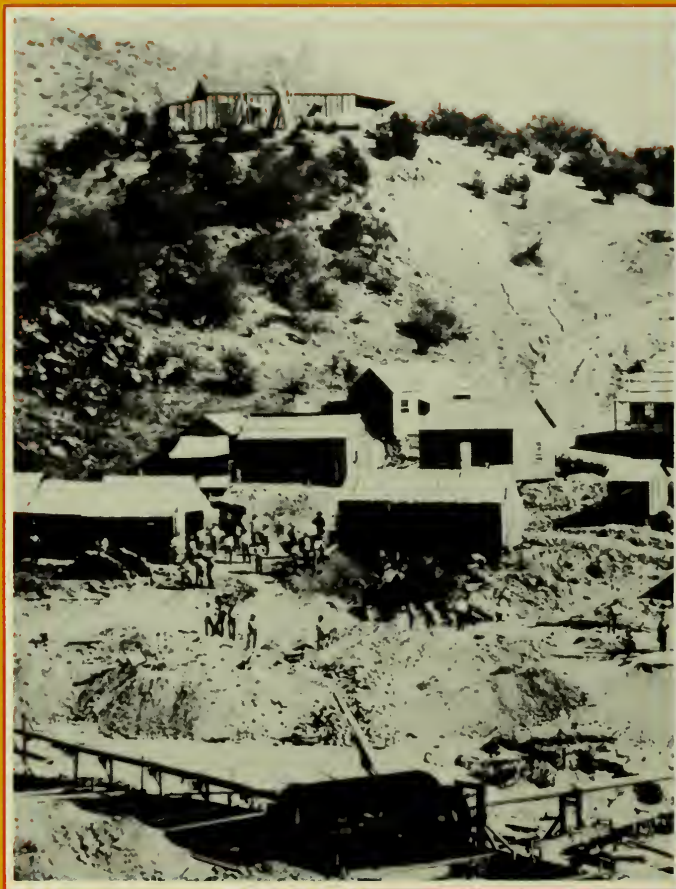
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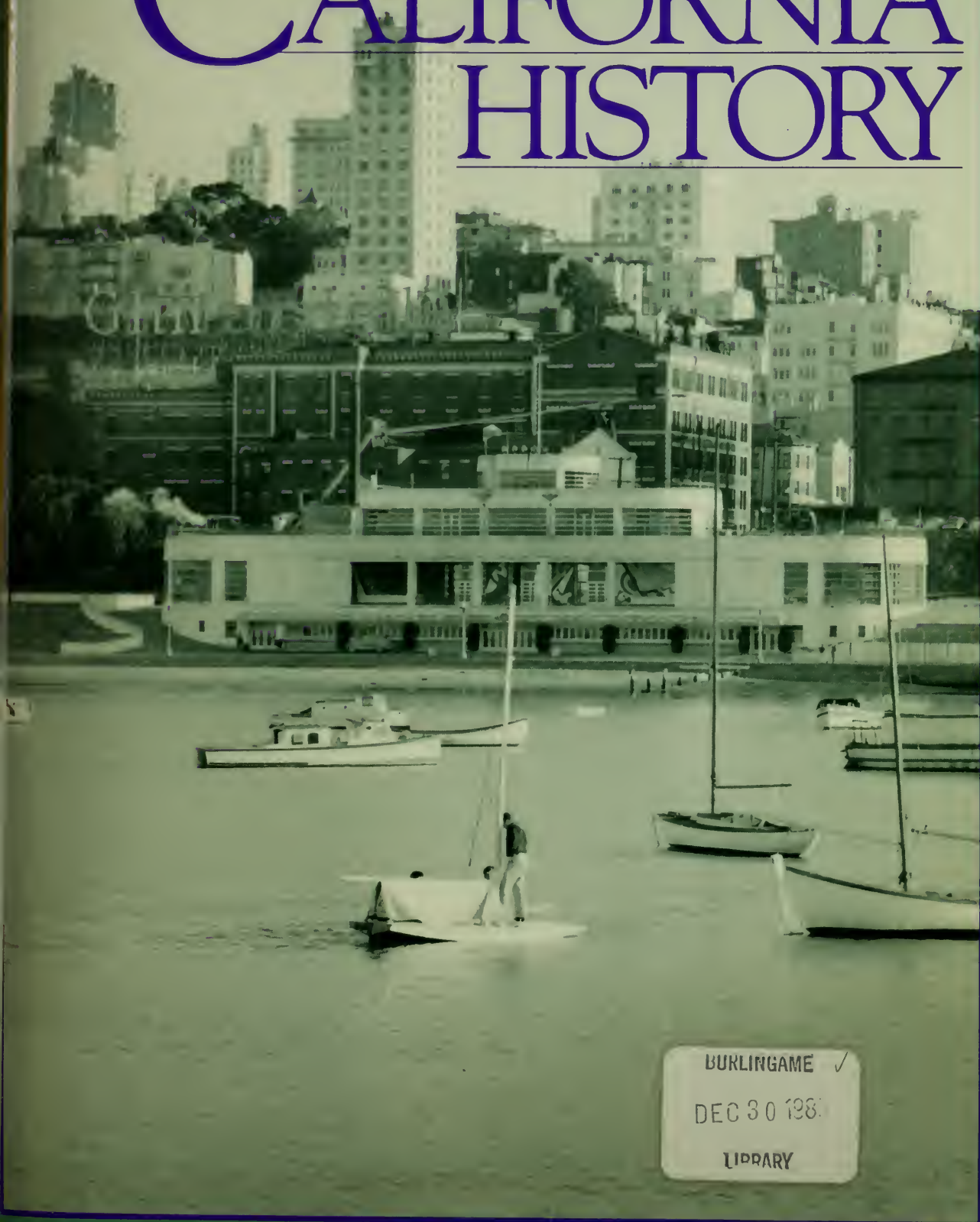
BACK COVER: *Miners coming from a meal at Cranwilles Claim on the Middle Fork of the American River, 1858.*

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# CALIFORNIA HISTORY



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## California Snapshots



ABOVE: From 1883 to 1906 the New Liverpool Salt Company scraped salt from deposits on the floor of the Salton Sink. A Colorado River flood in 1891 created a small saline lake no more than ten feet deep in the lowest part of the basin—265 feet below sea level—but left vast salt marshes exposed. Much larger floods in 1905, 1906, and 1907, when the Colorado cut a new channel through an irrigation canal, transformed the lake into the forty-five-mile long and eighty-three-foot deep Salton Sea. The salt works were obliterated. Los Angeles photographers Valentine and Putnam documented the profitable industry in a series of photographs taken around the turn of the century.

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COVER: San Francisco's Aquatic Park photographed by Minor White on February 20, 1950. This print made from White's original negative, has been cropped.

MINOR WHITE COLLECTION, CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO



# CALIFORNIA HISTORY

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NAME	Capacity Million gallons
LAKE MISSION	2,265
SUNSET	174.8
BALBOA	150.0
UNIVERSITY MOUND	140.9
SUNNYVALE	31.4
SUNNYVALE	4.3
COLLEGE HILL	13.8
STANFORD HEIGHTS	12.9
MERCED MANOR	9.5
LEWISBURG	3.3
FRANCISCO	2.5
POTRERO	1.0
MILLIKEN PARK	.80
MILLIKEN POINT	.1

• EXISTING  
• PROPOSED

S.F. WATER DEPT. STORAGE RESERVOIRS IN BAY AREA	
NAME	Capacity Million gallons
CALAVITAS	95,000
CRYSTAL SPRINGS	69,300
SAN ANGELES	15,000
PHILACITOS	5,100
SAN ANTONIO	30,300

ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES				
FROM	TO	NO. LINES	STRUCTURE	CAPACITY
MOCCASIN P.H.	NEVADA SUB	50.0	STEEL TOWER	2 115,000
D.R. HOLM P.H.	INTAKE SWTD	1.6	"	2
R.C. KIRKWOOD P.H.	INTAKE SWTD	0.6	"	2 130,000
INTAKE SWTD	WARMVILLE SUB	40.4	"	2
WARMVILLE SUB	SUBSTATION #	12.3	"	2 115,000



# HETCH HETCHY REVERSED

A Rural-Urban  
Struggle for Power

by Stephen P. Sayles

Among the contests which have pitted various interests against each other in California's "water wars," those between rural communities and metropolitan water consumers have stood out as particularly dramatic. Yet, the two archetypal battles which were fought in the early years of the twentieth century are remembered for quite different reasons. The diversion of water from the Owens Valley to Los Angeles destroyed a rural economy based on irrigation from local water sources and left a legacy of resistance by that community against metropolitan encroachment. When San Francisco flooded the Hetch Hetchy Valley, on the other hand, the rural Turlock and Modesto irrigation districts became beneficiaries of the project and joined its backers. Its best known opponents were not members of a community facing extinction but a more disinterested band of conservationists who fought for the valley as a natural treasure.

Four decades later, however, another struggle over Hetch Hetchy took place as Tuolumne County appraised its development prospects

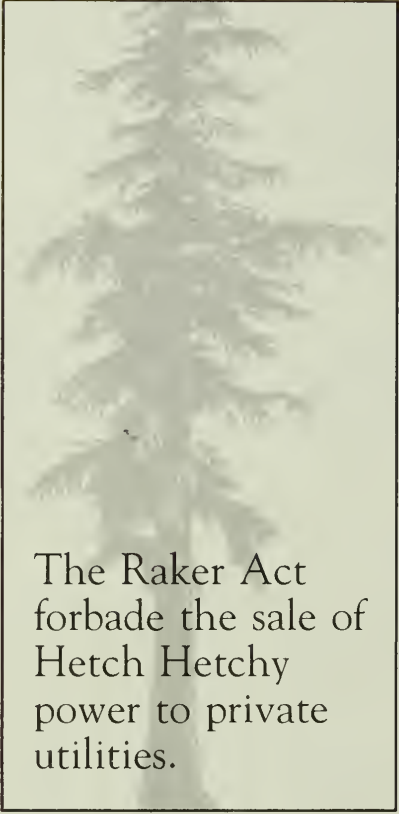




it wanted in the Hetch Hetchy Valley and along the Tuolumne River and permitted the city to undertake its massive project. It also required San Francisco to recognize prior claims on Tuolumne water. In addition, Section 6 forbade the sale of electrical power generated from Hetch Hetchy "to any corporation or individual, except a municipality or a municipal water district or irrigation district, . . ." such as a private utility.<sup>6</sup> This section had been inserted to win the support of utilitarian conservationists like Senator Norris, who did not want Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PGE) to monopolize water and power development in the Hetch Hetchy Valley.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, a large part of the impetus for the project had come from a widely shared perception that the private water companies which had supplied San Francisco in the nineteenth century would never serve the growing city adequately.

Construction of the Hetch Hetchy facilities commenced during the summer of 1914 under the direction of City Engineer Michael Maurice O'Shaughnessy. Although work was slowed by World War I, O'Shaughnessy steadily erected a network of dams, reservoirs, tunnels, and powerhouses to deliver water and power to San Francisco residents. In late October 1934, the system finally brought water into

Stephen P. Sayles is an associate professor of history at the University of LaVerne with a research interest in California water development. He is currently writing a biography of Will Semple Green, a nineteenth century California land developer and irrigationist.



## The Raker Act forbade the sale of Hetch Hetchy power to private utilities.

the city, but its power transmission lines reached only to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Newark substation in Alameda County. PGE accepted the Hetch Hetchy power and "wheeled," or delivered, an equal amount of power into the city on its own distribution system<sup>8</sup> under a contract concluded with PGE by city officials nine years previously, on July 1, 1925. San Francisco agreed to pay PGE two million dollars annually for the distribution service.<sup>9</sup> This arrangement, which roused powerful opposition within San Francisco, clearly did not conform to the provisions of Section 6 of the Raker Act forbidding the sale of Hetch Hetchy water or power to private interests for resale to others. Yet San Francisco voters rejected eight bond issues between 1927 and 1941 which would have placed the city in compliance with the federal

statute by creating a municipally owned power system. PGE allegedly spent over two hundred thousand dollars to defeat these bond issues.<sup>10</sup>

By the time the first power was transmitted to San Francisco in 1934, the New Deal was underway and Harold Ickes was Secretary of the Interior. Ickes filed suit to compel San Francisco to obey the federal law. City officials argued that since PGE acted only as the city's agent in distributing power generated in the Hetch Hetchy Valley, San Francisco was not "selling" its power to the private corporation. The United States Supreme Court disagreed, upholding Ickes' suit in April 1940, and San Francisco proposed a bond issue to acquire PGE's distribution system. Voters turned it down, and city leaders turned their attention to amending the Raker Act to remove the controversial ban on sales to private interests, although they received no encouragement from the Roosevelt administration.

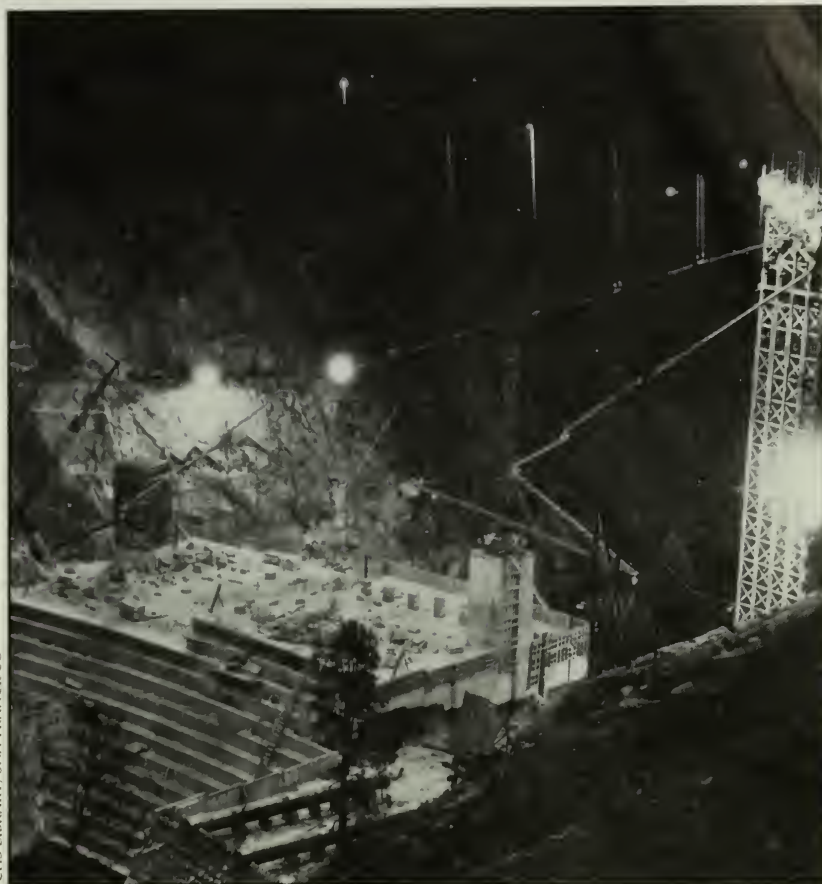
World War II intervened, postponing final resolution of the issue while priorities shifted elsewhere. The federal government permitted San Francisco to sell power to a defense aluminum plant near Riverbank. When the plant closed in 1944, a federal court order gave the city six months to comply with the Raker Act. Following several extensions of the deadline, a compromise was reached in July 1945. San Francisco contracted with PGE to sell Hetch Hetchy energy to Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts, which were not included in the ban on sales to private interests. This arrangement was intended to prevent PGE from acquiring Hetch Hetchy power to sell at its own discretion. To assure a skeptical Ickes that neither the city



nor the irrigation districts would have surplus power to sell PGE, San Francisco also took two industrial customers from PGE, leasing a transmission line from Newark to these plants.<sup>11</sup> San Francisco agreed to compensate PGE "in cash for the Newark-San Francisco wheeling services," rather than turning over power to PGE.<sup>12</sup> Ickes declined to contest this settlement and granted temporary authorization of the contract, provided that Hetch Hetchy power not be resold to PGE.

So the matter stood in uneasy, but formal, resolution during the late 1940s and early 1950s until Tuolumne County set out to develop its own hydroelectric power on the Tuolumne River. Like other rural areas in California, Tuolumne County was experiencing rapid growth in the postwar period. Construction of the proposed Tri-Dam (Donnells, Beardsley, and Tulloch) project on the Stanislaus River in Tuolumne County, expected to begin in the near future, promised to bring still more people, jobs, and capital; reports of new discoveries of mineral ores offered hope that the sagging mining industry would revive. Efforts were underway to bring a state prison camp or a junior college to the county, and house-to-house mail service was scheduled to begin in January 1955.<sup>13</sup>

Such Tuolumne boosters as Leland S. Gibbs of Shaws Flat feared, however, that existing local water resources could not support this economic and demographic expansion. Gibbs was a walnut grower and well connected in the area. He had worked for PGE's sales department and during World War II had di-



*Night construction work on the Hetch Hetchy Dam, June 6, 1922.*

rected the company's power installations at Mare Island, Riverbank, Richmond, and Benicia Arsenal. Returning to Shaws Flat after the war, he became an articulate spokesman for local economic development.<sup>14</sup> Although the Stanislaus and Tuolumne rivers flow through the county, by the early 1950s there was not enough water to serve the Mono Vista community and the area between Sonora and Jamestown.<sup>15</sup> This was because so much of the watershed had been appropriated by, and water and power diverted to, irrigation districts in the Central Valley, San Francisco, and the Bay Area.

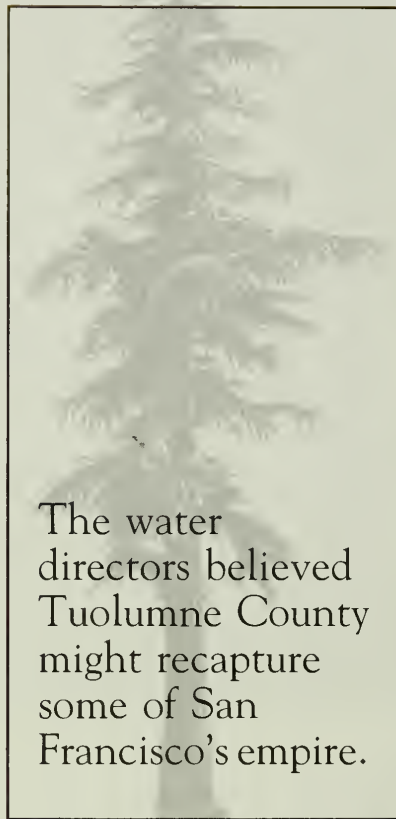
Following the initiative of the Sonora Grange, which had organized a special water committee to publicize the issue, Tuolumne County voters established Tuolumne County Water District Number 2 by a vote of 1,791 to 56 on May 20, 1947.<sup>16</sup> Its purpose was to develop and distribute water resources. The new district's board of directors elected

Gibbs as its first president.<sup>17</sup>

Under Gibbs's leadership, the water district moved aggressively to develop the Tuolumne-Stanislaus watershed. In conjunction with the Oakdale and South San Joaquin irrigation districts, the Tuolumne district filed water claims on the Stanislaus and the North Fork of the Tuolumne with the intention of building storage reservoirs and conduits to deliver water to the district. However, the sparsely populated rural county (in 1954, after a decade of rapid growth the population would reach 12,640) did not possess a sufficient tax base to finance such large construction projects. The water district's board of directors looked to another revenue source: the district would generate and sell hydroelectric power. What little unutilized power potential remained in the late 1940s and early 1950s was on the Tuolumne River. Consequently, Lee Gibbs "spent a great deal of time in the county recorder's

office trying to trace all water filings" on the river and its tributaries in order to locate a power site.<sup>18</sup> The directors did not publicize their interest in a Tuolumne River power plant. In fact, they referred to it as "Project X." When rumors began to circulate, they conceded that the mysterious project was "a power development on the Tuolumne River, to utilize hydro power which San Francisco had not utilized."<sup>19</sup> Therein lay the difficulty: the site which Gibbs and his friends identified as ideal for their project belonged to San Francisco. Just below the Early Intake Dam of the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, it had been allocated to the city as part of the Raker Act grant and had been intended as the site for a power plant which would serve San Francisco as part of the Hetch Hetchy system.<sup>20</sup> Hence, authorization for the Tuolumne project would require an amendment to the Raker Act. Contemplating San Francisco's failure to begin construction on the site after four decades and its lack of compliance to other provisions of the Raker Act, the Tuolumne County water directors believed the county might be able to recapture part of San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy empire.

Accordingly, Tuolumne leaders sought support from their representative in Congress for the necessary legislation which would change the terms of the Raker Act. As part of the sprawling mountain-valley Second Congressional District, Tuolumne County was represented in 1954 by Clair Engle, Democrat of Red Bluff. Then in his early forties, the hustling, flamboyant legislator held great political



The water directors believed Tuolumne County might recapture some of San Francisco's empire.

ambitions that would lead him into the United States Senate within five years. In 1954, however, he sought reelection in the June primary against Bill Berry of Placerville; his victory, combined with a national Democratic trend in November, would make him the new chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. His name was already linked to water development issues; he had written every major addition to California's massive Central Valley Project and had defended Southern California interests in the struggles over the Central Arizona and Colorado River Storage projects.

Engle had been concerned for some time that metropolitan colonialism should not infringe upon the rights of the counties from which the water came within his district. Moreover, his career reflected a life-long

antagonism toward Pacific Gas and Electric, which resulted from his involvement in the water struggles of Battle Creek Bottom in Shasta County in which the utility took over his family's water rights after prolonged and expensive litigation. As a consequence of this concern and background, and to aid the economic development of his district, Congressman Engle proved receptive to entreaties from Lee Gibbs and his allies to secure a locally valuable power site on the Tuolumne River.<sup>21</sup>

Exactly when Engle was brought into the water district's plans is unclear, but he certainly was actively involved as early as November 1950 when the proposed Tuolumne power project was still called "Project X." By January 1954, however, events had progressed to such an extent that Tuolumne water district attorney Martin S. McDonough of Sacramento was consulting with Bay Area engineering firms to resolve physical difficulties in the proposed project. In February he sounded out Engle on congressional support for a revision of the Raker Act. He assured the congressman that the water district would "compensate" San Francisco for the use of the power site and that it would finance construction by revenue bonds.<sup>22</sup> The issue finally went public on July 6, 1954, when Engle introduced H.R. 9579 to authorize Tuolumne County Water District No. 2 to construct, operate, and maintain a power plant on the Tuolumne River.

The congressman pursued a two-pronged strategy. He mobilized mountain area newspapers to publicize his legislation, particularly in Tuolumne County itself, relying



heavily on Archie D. Stevenot and Donald I. Segerstrom to do the leg-work. Both men were descendants of Forty-Niners who had pioneered the mining industry of the region.<sup>23</sup> Stevenot was in his early seventies and had important contacts in San Francisco's financial community. He and Segerstrom, who edited a local newspaper, chaired the Citizens Committee for the Tuolumne Power Drop which was established to obtain endorsements from rural chambers of commerce and veterans, service, and fraternal organizations. In addition, the water district board of directors labored intensively for endorsements from Rotary clubs, boards of supervisors, and farm centers.

Secondly, during the summer of 1954, Engle proceeded "on a friendly basis" with San Francisco, where an election campaign had just begun and the Tuolumne power site measure would inevitably become an emotional political issue. Accordingly, Engle tried to defuse the issue by informing retiring Mayor Elmer E. Robinson and other officials that he wanted to cooperate with them. Before his rural constituency, he was much more combative. He believed the city was "highly vulnerable" on the issue, "and if they want a brass-knucks fight," he declared, "we can make it very interesting for them."<sup>24</sup>

Apparently, city leaders were more than willing to have "a brass-knucks fight," since they denounced H.R. 9579 as "a multi-million dollar steal."<sup>25</sup> So harsh was this condemnation that Engle warned Mayor Robinson that the issue could "broaden out" to include San Francisco's legal position in the Hetch Hetchy under the Raker Act.<sup>26</sup> In late



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*Granite walls and a narrow outlet made the Hetch Hetchy Valley an ideal reservoir.*

September 1954, Engle met with San Francisco City Attorney Dion L. Holm, Public Utilities Commission general manager James H. Turner, and public relations representative William J. Losh to resolve their differences. When Holm and Turner, both veterans of Hetch Hetchy issues, showed no inclination to compromise, Engle proposed that McDonough and Gibbs follow through on the threat to challenge the city's legal position in the Tuolumne River. "Big cities are notoriously phlegmatic," he noted, "and if we hit them fast and hard we may catch them pretty much unprepared."<sup>27</sup>

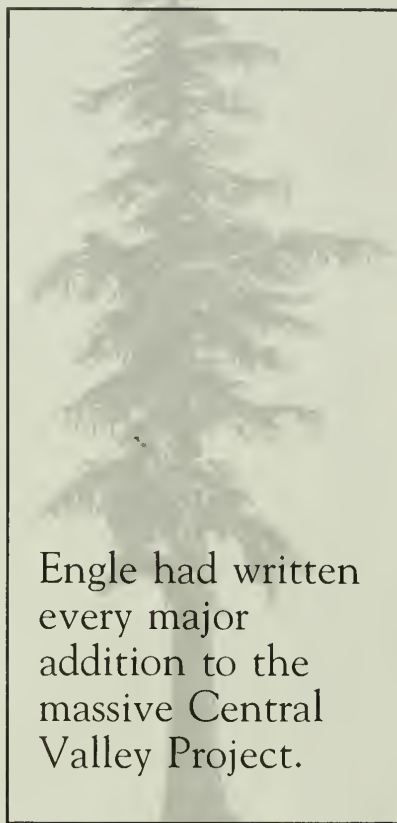
In late November 1954, Engle also

met representatives of San Francisco's major newspapers. He stressed three points: first, mountain residents did not want "a bucket full of San Francisco's water but only desired to put a wheel in the water to be turned as the water runs down the hill"; second, the water district would pay the city for "its present improvement on the river"; and three, water was scarce in the foothill area and increased power generation was essential to accommodate the growing population throughout the state. Economic development of the back country, he claimed, would benefit San Francisco by providing it with a larger rural market for its industries and businesses.<sup>28</sup>

The Democrats' success in winning a majority of the House in 1954 midterm elections enabled Engle to become chairman of the powerful House Interior committee, a significant development in the Hetch Hetchy matter. In January 1955, when the new Congress convened, he reintroduced the Tuolumne project as H.R. 2388, which was sent to his committee. San Francisco leaders ignored Engle's plea for cooperation. Instead, Mayor Robinson assigned Dion Holm, a veteran political operator who had considered running for mayor in 1955, to protect the city's position on the Tuolumne River.

Dion Holm had long served in the city's Hetch Hetchy counsel department. He also became assistant district attorney and in 1955 served as city attorney. Considering the Tuolumne challenge a political rather than a legal one, Holm marshalled public opinion in San Francisco and collected as many anti-H.R. 2388 resolutions as possible from local governments and private groups in the Bay Area. These resolutions argued that Engle's bill threatened San Francisco's future growth by weakening the city's ability to exploit fully its Hetch Hetchy facilities. Holm then directed these resolutions to Clair Engle's committee.

Holm's political hand in this controversy was strengthened by the long-time alliance between San Francisco and the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts. In a long journey from the contentious days of the earlier Hetch Hetchy fight, the city and the irrigation districts had forged a close relationship during the 1940s when all parties recognized that there was enough water in the Tuolumne for both urban and



Engle had written every major addition to the massive Central Valley Project.

agricultural use and agreed to cooperate in its development. In November 1943, San Francisco and the irrigation districts had agreed to build Cherry Valley and New Don Pedro dams. Later, in 1949, they prepared plans for the actual construction and operation of the Cherry Valley and New Don Pedro units as well as embarking upon a flood control program for the lower Tuolumne and lower San Joaquin river area in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers.<sup>29</sup> By the summer of 1954, a community of economic and political interests had tied the rural and urban forces together just as the Tuolumne water district moved to wrest a power site from the city in Hetch Hetchy.

To head off the Engle bill in Congress, Holm and his friends placed a \$30 million bond issue on the November 1955 ballot in San Fran-

cisco. Its purpose was to finance the construction of a power plant at the Early Intake site while shelving the soon-to-be-completed Cherry Dam power house. This was "really being a dog-in-the-manger with a vengeance," Engle charged, and it could lead to a review of the city's contracts with PGE and the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts.<sup>30</sup> This threat was "political extortion," cried the *Examiner*, and it urged San Francisco to challenge "Mr. Engle's bluff."<sup>31</sup>

Congressional subcommittee hearings on H.R. 2388 were held in late March, and a thirteen-member delegation from San Francisco arrived in Washington, D.C., a few days in advance to lobby subcommittee members. Reacting to an earlier Engle threat to invalidate the Early Intake bond issue by amending his bill to the Cherry Valley site, Dion Holm announced that San Francisco would submit a \$54 million bond issue at the November elections to construct power facilities at both sites.<sup>32</sup> The city's lobbying effort apparently had made a significant impression upon subcommittee members. Attempts by Engle and Lee Gibbs to depict a desperate need for water and power in Tuolumne County did not appear sufficient to convince congressmen of the need for substantial revision of the Raker Act to allow the Tuolumne water district to construct its facilities in the Hetch Hetchy.

Transcripts of the hearing reveal Engle's preoccupation with the nature of the connection between San Francisco and the Turlock and Modesto irrigation districts. All parties had a vested interest in the develop-



ment of the Tuolumne dating from the Raker Act, but Engle seemed convinced that the city indirectly sold its power to PGE via sales to the irrigation districts and thus violated the Raker Act. He pressed the districts' representatives hard on this point, but they would not concede that they or San Francisco were in violation of this federal law. Under more gentle examination from Democratic Congressman B.F. Sisk of Fresno, whose congressional district included Modesto and Turlock, these spokesmen declared that energy sold from their Don Pedro Dam installation was sold to PGE independently of any power acquired from the city's Hetch Hetchy facilities.<sup>33</sup>

The San Francisco delegation, headed by Dion Holm, presented an aggressive and effective case. City and Bay Area congressmen, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and San Francisco Labor Council representatives all testified that H.R. 2388 was detrimental to the city's economic growth. Conceding Engle's point that San Franciscans had rejected eight previous bond issues to build a power distribution system from Newark to San Francisco, Franck Havenner of the labor council emphasized the role of PGE in funding opposition to those bond issues and added that he was "reliably informed" that PGE would back the proposed new \$54 million bond issue.<sup>34</sup> James H. Turner, general manager of Hetch Hetchy operations, also did not disagree with Engle's observation that the city was now moving on the Early Intake site to thwart H.R. 2388. Dion Holm warned that if Engle's bill became law, Holm would initiate years of litigation to take the case to the Supreme Court.

TEHAMA COUNTY LIBRARY, RED BLUFF



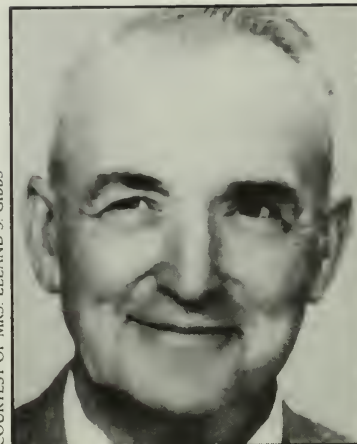
(Top) Leland S. Gibbs of Shaws Flat.  
(Above) Clair Engle campaigning in Placerville in the mid-1950s.

He denounced H.R. 2388 as "an immoral act . . . You would be taking something bought and paid for by San Francisco and conveying it to Tuolumne County."<sup>35</sup>

Shortly after the hearings adjourned, Engle expressed frustration over the attitude of the irrigation districts, describing them as "very hard-headed and beligerant [sic] . . ." The districts had been ably represented by their spokesmen

who did not concede a single major point to Engle's assault. They also frustrated the congressman's attempt to demonstrate possible linkage between the irrigation districts' receipt of Hetch Hetchy power supplies and the simultaneous sale of power to PGE, which, if proven, could have been a violation of the Raker Act. Engle added, "If they continue their present attitude, there is nothing we can do but make

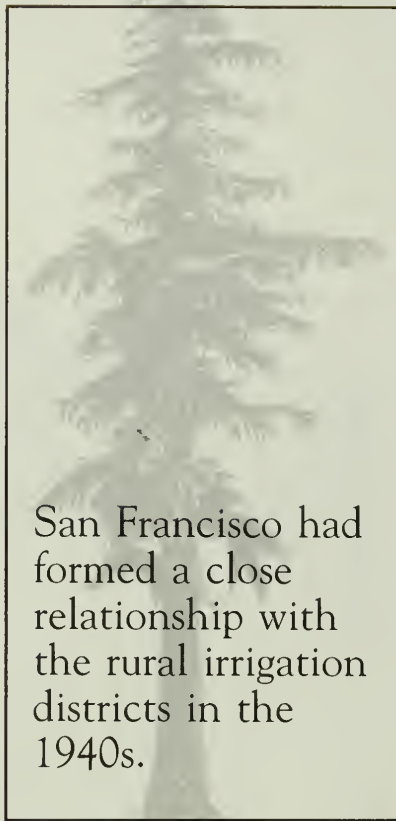
COURTESY OF MRS. LELAND S. GIBBS



it so tough on them that they will have to get out . . . if they break with San Francisco and join with us, which doesn't appear likely, we would be better off."<sup>36</sup> He urged Tuolumne leaders to send a delegation up and down the Central Valley to unify rural support, but he did not expect much support from Representative Sisk's district. Engle grumbled that "they apparently have a fat deal worked out with San Francisco and don't want anybody else getting into the picture."<sup>37</sup>

The San Francisco *Examiner* warned Holm and other officials not to be lulled by Engle's "poor public showing." It suspected that the congressman had made a superficial effort at the hearings while relying on back room trading deals, and it recommended that the city seek allies from other urban areas whose water supply involved federal land or rights.<sup>38</sup> The mountain counties took exception to the tone of the editorial attacks, particularly the use of such adjectives as "weird," "immoral," "steal," and "grab," and the depiction of Engle as "Black Bart" and "claim jumper." Don Segerstrom, for one, thought that the *Examiner's* editorial was "a bigoted and veiled appeal to Los Angeles" for instructions on how to "suck up" all water in the mountains. Both urban areas "apparently reason . . . that small counties have no purpose to exist other than as satellites from which wealth can be drawn with no hope of return."<sup>39</sup>

Proceeding with its announced plan, San Francisco organized early in 1955 a bond screening committee under Jerd F. Sullivan, President of the Crocker Bank, in order to promote the bond issue which enabled the completion of the Hetch Hetchy



San Francisco had formed a close relationship with the rural irrigation districts in the 1940s.

system. Archie Stevenot was well acquainted with most of the committee and held a series of informal discussions with them during the spring of 1955 in the hope that he might forestall action on the bond issue. In a letter to Engle, he indicated that he was making progress, and that the members' views of the Engle bill had been distorted by the local press,<sup>40</sup> but these optimistic reports proved to be unfounded. On June 2, 1955, the bond committee approved the \$54 million bond issue by a unanimous vote.

Engle had been skeptical about the promised success of Stevenot's activities all along, but he thought that the bond issue could be defeated with external pressure. Accordingly, he asked the Interior Department and the Comptroller General's office to investigate the city's compliance with the Raker Act. Al-

though the Interior Department did not appear enthusiastic about such an investigation, the Comptroller General was interested because, Engle thought, a similar investigation had been squelched several years before by political pressure.<sup>41</sup> By late August, with the investigation underway, Engle urged the Comptroller General's office to make public "some kind of expression" before the November elections.<sup>42</sup>

While Engle quietly pressured the investigation, San Francisco Mayor Robinson appointed a five-member bond committee to lead the campaign for Proposition A, the \$54 million bond issue. It was composed of city capitalists united under the slogan: "Repel the invader! Keep water cheap!" The mayor claimed that revenue from the Early Intake and Cherry Valley installations would pay much of the cost of water distribution. Should the bond be defeated, he said, San Francisco would have higher water rates. This theme was echoed in endorsements by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the city press, and by congressional representatives from the city.<sup>43</sup>

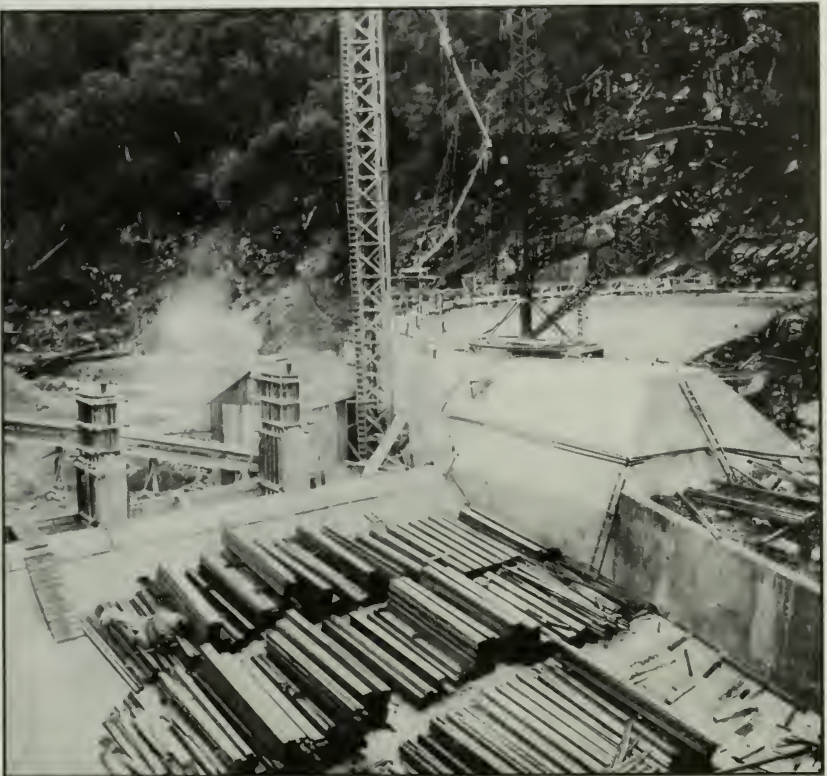
A major task of the city newspapers was to portray Engle as a villain, a powerful "cow county" legislator carrying on a personal vendetta against the cities. The congressman's voice "is that of a man who is politically powerful and accustomed to having his way in Congress; his chance of getting his way in this circumstance would be frightfully good" should the bond issue be defeated, commented the *Examiner*.<sup>44</sup> While Engle resolved to do nothing that would exacerbate this hostility, he urged Tuolumne resi-



dents to write letters to city newspapers. They should stress that the mountain counties did not want to take any of San Francisco's water and that the Tuolumne water district wanted to develop the power site at its own expense and share the profits of its power sales with the city.<sup>45</sup>

**O**n election day, November 8, 1955, San Francisco overwhelmingly approved Proposition A by 169,055 to 44,925 votes.<sup>46</sup> Engle confided to a newspaper friend that "the City sank my boat on the Hetch Hetchy."<sup>47</sup> Although Lee Gibbs and Archie Stevenot pressed him to continue the fight, the congressman faced political reality. The push to amend the Raker Act had been a gamble at best, and he was not willing to allow the controversy to jeopardize his ambition to climb the political ladder. In addition, he was not sure that he could get the Hetch Hetchy bill, H.R. 2388, out of his own committee, much less out of Congress. Should San Francisco fail to issue the bonds and begin work on the project within a reasonable time, however, Engle indicated that he would "take the matter up again."<sup>48</sup>

The effort of the mountain area to wrest control of a Tuolumne River power site concluded on this tentative note. Once again, the city prevailed in its zeal to protect its rights to the water and power resources of the region. The fact that the city had yet to develop its own power distribution system as intended in the Raker Act—and still relies on PGE to carry its power across San Francisco Bay from Newark—was not lost on Tuolumne residents. That failure remained a source of controversy in



CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO



CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO

(Top) The Early Intake Diversion Dam and Spillway under construction in November 1924. The site where Tuolumne County sought to build its power plant is just downstream from this point.

(Above) The Moccasin power plant in August 1925. The Moccasin plant was one of the first to transmit power to San Francisco.

city politics, leading to recurring suggestions that San Francisco would have to purchase the PGE distribution system.<sup>49</sup> Even so, the city's rights to the Tuolumne have never again been as seriously challenged as in the mid-fifties. Moreover, San Francisco's leaders were able to exploit the rural threat to spur voters to accept a bond issue sufficient for

it to complete construction in the Hetch Hetchy Valley. For that alone, Congressman Engle noted with irony to the San Francisco Press Club, San Franciscans ought to be "gratified to him" for undertaking the challenge.<sup>50</sup> His remark was received with delighted applause. □

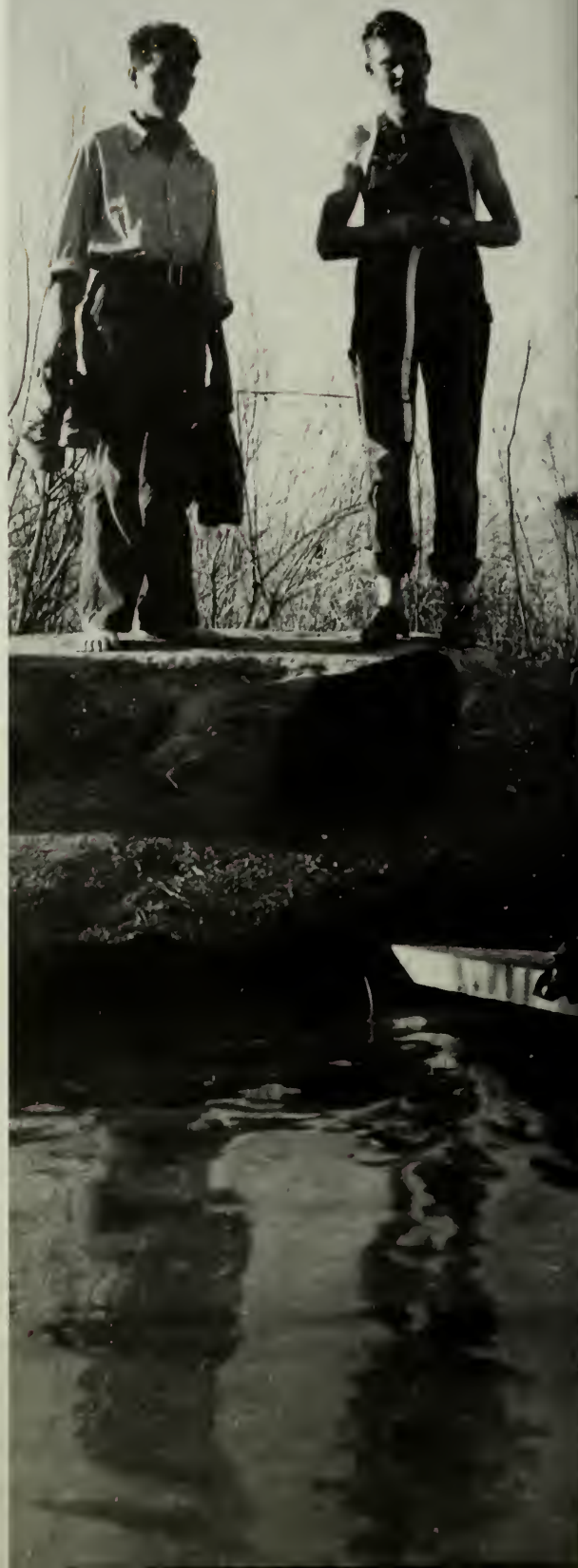
*See notes on page 311.*

Two government photographers worked in California during the first and second Roosevelt administrations. Dorothea Lange created documentary images which have become the standard iconography of suffering during the Great Depression. Russell Lee, who photographed in California for the same agency five years later, had a different vision. Where Lange saw hurt and despair, Lee saw healing and hope. Lange combined art and politics to produce pictures that demanded change, while Lee, who shared Lange's politics, used his camera to record those things that were worth saving in the face of change. Although both photographers worked for the New Deal, differences in artistic temperament and changes during the few years which separated their work in California caused them to record distinctly different impressions of the state.

The New Deal photographic projects grew out of agricultural relief programs with particular importance for California, where three hundred thousand refugees from the Dust Bowl sought work and a new life. The Resettlement Administration (RA) was established in 1935 specifically to provide housing assistance to migrant farm laborers. After two years in administrative limbo as an independent agency, it was absorbed into the Agriculture Department in 1937 as the Farm Security Administration (FSA). In addition to the personnel who administered the RA/FSA's relief programs, Rexford Tugwell, Roosevelt's chief relief executive, appointed an "historical

section" headed by Roy Emerson Stryker. Stryker, who had studied under Tugwell at Columbia University had also worked with Tugwell on *American Economic Life*, an economics textbook. His search for photographic illustrations for the book had introduced him to the pioneering social photography of Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine, as well as to the more recent work of Margaret Bourke-White.<sup>1</sup> As head of the historical section, Stryker developed a team of photographers whose work not only documented rural poverty but also provided the United States with its most indelible images of the Great Depression. It is for this, far more than for its actual relief work, that the RA/FSA remains in the popular memory today.

Dorothea Lange worked for the RA/FSA mostly in California until she was laid off in 1940. Russell Lee made several trips to the state in 1940 and 1942. Their work brackets the life of the RA/FSA and expresses two quite distinct artistic responses to the depression and the New Deal. Yet their fundamental similarities were much greater than their differences, which occurred within a broad framework of shared values and purposes. Both were sensitive photographers who cared about the plight of the people they photographed. Both were politically sympathetic to the New Deal and willing to use their artistic abilities to further its goals. In addition, there were remarkable parallels in the personal lives of Lange and Lee. Both grew up in single-parent families, had difficult childhoods, and





# OF THE BEHOLDER

Images of California by  
Dorothea Lange & Russell Lee  
by Steven M. Gelber



married painters whom they later divorced. Both then had successful second marriages to writers with strong social consciences.

Dorothea Lange's father was a lawyer who deserted his wife and three children when Dorothea was twelve years old. Her mother commuted from Hoboken, where the family lived, to New York City to work as a librarian. Dorothea was educated on the lower East Side, the only gentile, she said, among three thousand Jews in her school. Her sense of herself as an outsider was accentuated by her limp, the result of polio contracted when she was seven. Lange began her photographic career as an assistant to portrait photographer Arnold Genthe. At the age of twenty-two she and a girlfriend left New York for an around-the-world trip only to have it cut short in San Francisco by a pickpocket. For the next fifteen years she worked in the Bay Area as a portrait photographer, becoming a fixture in the San Francisco artistic community along with her husband, western painter Maynard Dixon. Lange's interest in documentary photography was sparked by the impact of the depression on San Francisco workers. Taking her camera into the streets near her studio in 1932, Lange photographed the classic image of an unemployed man holding a tin can on the White Angel bread line. (The "White Angel" was a rich woman who supplied food to

*Oklahoma migratory workers washing in a hot spring in the desert of the Imperial Valley, March 1937.*

DOROTHEA LANGE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



DOROTHEA LANGE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

the hungry.) At the age of forty, Lange abandoned the studio for the streets. As if to make the change complete, she divorced Dixon and married Berkeley economist Paul S. Taylor. Taylor had used one of her early documentary pictures of a Communist speaker to illustrate an article on the 1934 San Francisco general strike and then hired her as the official photographer for a series of reports for the California Rural Rehabilitation Administration. This work brought her to the attention of Stryker, who chose her as one of the first RA photographers, with a special concern for California and the West.<sup>2</sup>

Like Lange, Russell Lee was born into solidly middle class surroundings. His family ran a number of farm businesses in Illinois, and he remained independently "comfortable," if not actually wealthy, throughout his life. Despite financial security, however, his personal life was extremely difficult. Lee's parents divorced when he was five, and he remained estranged from his father for much of his life. His mother was killed in an auto accident when he was eight, and he

was shuffled from one guardian to another for the rest of his childhood. Lee got a degree in chemical engineering from Lehigh University, married an art student, and took a job with the Certainteed Products Company, manufacturers of composition roofing. But he found the work unchallenging and left for the West Coast in 1929.<sup>3</sup>

Russell and Doris Lee spent two years in San Francisco during the early depression at the same time that Lange was beginning to develop her documentary style. It is possible that the Lees and Dixons met, since the San Francisco art community was small and tightly knit, but Lee did not get his first camera until 1935, two years after he and his wife had left California for the artists' colony at Woodstock, New York. His wife's career was progressing well, and Lee set out to develop his own artistic skills. Distressed by the quality of his drawing, he thought that he might capture what was eluding him by photographing the things he was trying to paint.<sup>4</sup> He quickly discovered that he was more interested in photography and the photographic process than in any drawings or paintings he could make from the pictures. Photography allowed Lee to combine his interest in chemistry with his artistic inclination. Abandoning painting for photography and inspired by the progressive political environment of Woodstock, Lee began photographing depression-era New York City. Here he experimented with a technique that was the precursor to the "photo

Steven M. Gelber is an associate professor of history at Santa Clara University. He has been guest curator of several shows on New Deal art at the deSaisset Museum. He is interested in the cultural impact of capitalism and has written of its effects on subjects ranging from art to baseball. He is currently studying gambling in the nineteenth century and a modern religious/social movement.



essay" in which a subject is developed through a series of related pictures that provide a rounded view of a given topic. Lee heard of the RA photographic section in the summer of 1936 and traveled to Washington to ask for a place on the staff. Although he did not hire him immediately, Stryker was impressed enough by Lee's work to call him back a month later. Lee stayed with the project until it folded in the early days of World War II.<sup>5</sup>

Lee's early work for the LRA/FSA is as gritty as anything done by Lange. He photographed tenant farmers in Iowa and floods in the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys. But despite the focus on poverty and suffering—standard for all RA/FSA photographers—Lee's pictures always had a different quality. Alone of all the photographers on the project, Lee regularly worked indoors. As a chemist, he was able to push the speed of his film, but he still had to haul his large-format cameras and clumsy flash bulbs into crowded little homes. His personal charm apparently made his subjects feel at ease, and he was able to capture people as part of their

(Left) Daughter of a migrant fruit worker in a camp on the American River near Sacramento, November 1936.

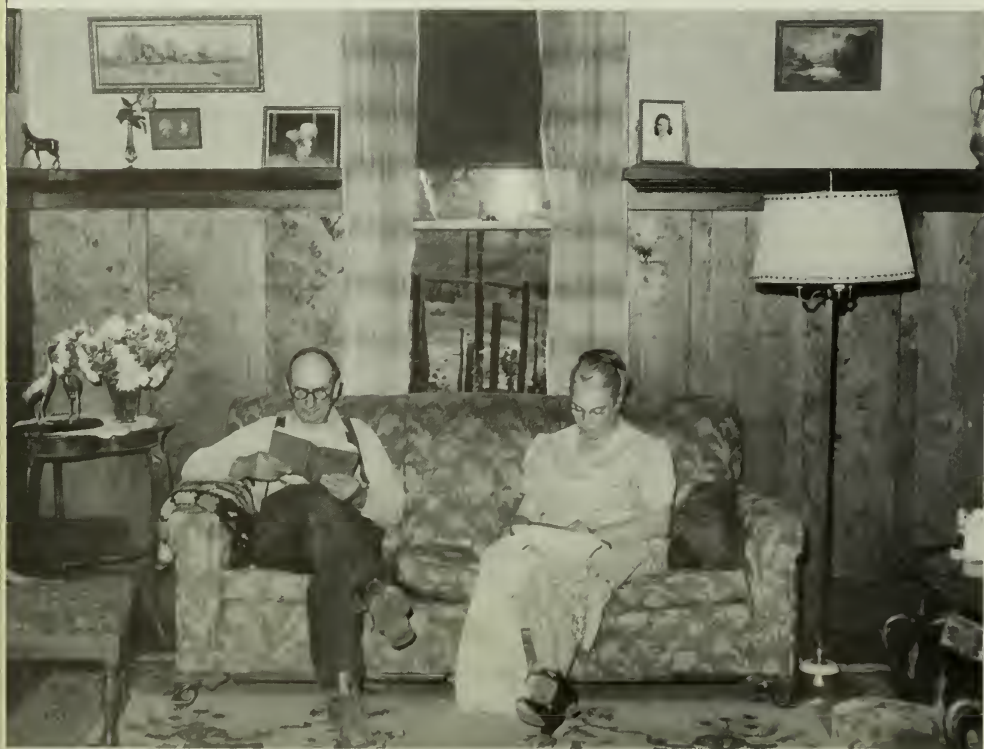
(Right) John Frost and his daughter, November, 1940. Frost, a Farm Security Administration client, was part owner of 135 acres of semi-marginal land in Tehama County, where he raised turkeys, hogs and dairy cattle. He had a family of seven.

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environment. His people are rooted, with a sense of place and personal solidity.<sup>6</sup>

The RA/FSA had Lange stationed in the West and Walker Evans in the South, so Lee was assigned to cover his native Midwest. There he developed the "American Scene" style that contrasted so sharply with Lange's documentary approach. Even before Roosevelt took the oath of office, critics had begun to herald the emergence of a new movement in art which they called the American Scene. Although it had no clearly articulated philosophy, the movement produced a representational form of art that consciously rejected European modernism and sought its subject matter in the everyday life and history of the American people. Centered in the Midwest, the American Scene took a positive view of life, stressing the strength of tradition and community. The American Scene looked for a way out of the depression in culture, not

(Top left) Migratory Mexican field worker's home on the edge of a frozen pea field in the Imperial Valley, March 1937.

(Left) Lee's caption for this photograph taken in Placer County in November, 1940, reflects his sensitivity to the harsh realities his subjects faced: "Fruit farmer and his wife in their living room. These people have raised fruit on over four hundred acres for twenty-five years, but because of the changed market conditions are now heavily in debt to the Federal Land Bank. This year they didn't even pick many of their pears, knowing they could not sell them."

(Right) A Turlock mother sends her son off to school in May, 1942.



in politics. The implicit ideal was the solidarity of the barn raising, not that of the mass demonstration.<sup>7</sup>

Lee's youth in a Midwestern farm family may well have predisposed him toward an American Scene world view. His marriage to Doris Emrick Lee certainly furthered that trend. Doris Lee, whose artistic success preceded Russell's, was one of the more important young American Scene artists of the thirties. Although she never achieved the fame of Grant Wood, John Steuart Curry, and Thomas Hart Benton (the "big three" of the movement), her painting *Thanksgiving Dinner* won the Logan Prize at the Chicago Art Institute in 1931, and her work is still reproduced as representative of the movement.

Lee's American Scene perspective was thus squarely in the mainstream of depression era art, which stressed what was right with America, most conspicuously in the murals painted under New Deal programs. Schools, courthouses, post offices, and government office buildings were decorated with scenes of happy home and family life in which political, class, regional, and ethnic divisions disappeared. It is often incorrectly assumed that this saccharine view of the world was somehow mandated by the government. In fact, federal officials took a relatively *laissez faire* attitude toward the murals. Those few California artists who included critical social commentary in their murals suffered occasional criticism from local people but almost none from the federal program officials.<sup>8</sup> To some extent the muralists may have

felt inclined to paint in a noncritical fashion because their work was intended to be decorative. Not so the FA/FSA photographers, who were supposed to document the problems of rural America. Lee's idiom reflects his personal vision, not conformity to external pressures. That vision stands in sharp contrast to the documentary style of Lange and the other RA/FSA photographers.

The term "documentary style" is something of a misnomer, because it did more than merely document some aspect of life. Rather, it attempted to persuade the viewer. Artists working in the documentary style were almost all politically on the left, and they saw their work as a political as well as an artistic expression. By drawing attention to the harsh realities of poverty, they believed they could help bring about changes that would relieve the plight of the poor. As propaganda for social change, documentary art found a ready audience among those who felt that the government had an obligation to help the less fortunate.<sup>9</sup> Prominent among its audience were the members of the Roosevelt administration. In its pure form, documentary work held society's ills up to a mirror, and the concern for accuracy made the photograph the natural and most widely used medium for this style. Indeed, one of the things Lange gave up when she switched from studio to documentary photography was the routine manipulation of pictures, either before or after they were exposed. (Never an absolutist,



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however, she was not opposed to cropping and even retouching when she considered it necessary.)<sup>10</sup>

**I**t is possible to see the American Scene and the documentary style as opposites, with one stressing the positive and the other the negative. The American Scene radiates a kind of self-satisfied nationalism while the documentary style exposes the failures of the American polity. To the extent that artists were political (and most were not), those on the left were attracted to the documentary style. The fact of working in the American Scene style did not mean an artist was conservative, however. Lee, for example, divorced his first wife in 1937 as their careers pulled them in separate directions and married a Texas newspaper reporter named Jean Smith. Her strong political views reenforced Lee's, and it was she who accompanied him on his trips through California, where his American Scene style reached its climax.<sup>11</sup> In its own way, the American Scene style served the New Deal by emphasizing the inherent strength of the people and depicting the kind of world that faith, hard

work, and the New Deal could create.

There was also a simple historical reason for the differences in the California photographs of Lee and Lange. Lange worked during a period when conditions were not only objectively bad but when they were an argument for the New Deal. She started when Roosevelt was in his first administration and the watchwords were relief, reform, and recovery. Anything that pointed to the need for government action stood as an indictment of the Republicans and as a justification for action by the Democrats. Thus Lange was a propagandist for change.

Lee, on the other hand, worked in California during a period when World War II had already begun in Europe, and American economic conditions had improved dramatically as a result of orders for war related products. In fact, there was less poverty to photograph. Moreover, Roosevelt was at the end of his second term and in the beginning of his third; pictures of poverty would point not to the need for the New Deal but to its failures. Clearly no agency funded by the government was going to bite the hand that fed it. The war itself brought new priorities. Writing in 1940, Stryker told one of his photographers to look for "Autumn" pictures, "Emphasize the idea of abundance—the 'horn of plenty' and pour maple syrup over it. . . . I know your damned photographer's soul writhes, but to hell with it," he told the man. "Do you think I give a damn about a photographer's soul with Hitler at our doorstep? You

(Left) Hitchhiking on U.S. Highway 99, November, 1936. The 24-year-old man and his 17-year-old wife had come from West Salem, North Carolina. Their baby was born early in 1935 in the Imperial Valley, where they were working as field laborers.

(Right) Getting ready for the parade at the Fiesta of the Holy Ghost in Santa Clara, May 1942.



are nothing but camera fodder to me."<sup>12</sup> So Lee was a propagandist for the status quo.

Lee's pictures have an unintended artistic and historical irony, because they were taken immediately after the plight of the migrant workers had become the focus of national concern. The publication of John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* in 1939 and the release of the motion picture a year later, created the kind of intense public awareness that the FSA historical section had only dreamed about. The irony lies not only in the fact that it took the private sector to mobilize public opinion about the migrants, but that the movie industry did so when the worst of the problem had passed and when the government photographers had moved from showing what was wrong to concentrating on what was right.

Thus, the divergent views depicted in the photographs of Dorothea Lange and Russell Lee are the result of a series of different influences: Lange's documentary style versus Lee's American Scene vision; Lange's need to demonstrate the failures of the old deal versus Lee's need to illustrate the success of the New Deal; and finally the very real economic hardships of Lange's early 1930s as opposed to the relative prosperity of the early 1940s in which Lee worked. Taken together, the two photographers provide us with a dramatic visual representation of historic change in California during the Roosevelt administration. □

See notes on page 312.



RUSSELL LEE/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



# A DREAM OF 7 DECADES: SAN FRANCISCO'S AQUATIC PARK

by James P. Delgado

**P**iers, docks, wharves, and landings dominate the waterfront of San Francisco. Landfill, seawalls, and millions of pilings driven into the bay bottom transformed the soft contours of Yerba Buena Cove, Mission Bay, North Beach, and Hunters Point as the city thrived on its rich maritime trade. There is, however, one purposeful exception. Nestled against the slopes of Black Point (now Fort Mason), and surrounded by the bustling commercial activity of nearby Fisherman's Wharf is San Francisco's Aquatic Park. Conceived in the nineteenth century when rapid commercial and industrial development of the waterfront drastically limited access to the open water, Aquatic Park was planned as another type of development, a recreational

enclave preserved and set apart from the construction of breakwaters, piers, and wharves. It took seven decades for the dream to be realized, and then, in the hour of triumph during the Great Depression, the park became a battleground for opposing interests contending over broken promises. Despite the problems which plagued its development and construction, though, a determined group of enthusiasts continued to use the park, and today it is administered by the National Park Service as part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

The area ultimately developed as an aquatic park was first known as Black Point Cove. The cove was named for adjacent Black Point, the northernmost extension of the San Francisco peninsula, which received its name from its stand of dark laurel which contrasted with the surrounding dunes of white, wind-blown sand. The shallow water

cove, with narrow beaches and steep sand cliffs rising from the water's edge, was isolated from the small urban core of pre-Gold Rush San Francisco, then limited to today's financial district. In the 1850s, the burgeoning population of the infant city pushed the town limits over the sand hills bordering Yerba Buena Cove, up onto the slopes of Russian Hill, and into the North Beach area. By the time the city reached the cove and the point, both were public property. On November 6, 1850, President Millard Fillmore designated the land a military reservation vital to the defense of San Francisco harbor.<sup>1</sup> The land was not immediately occupied by the military, however, and others quickly moved onto it.

On the slopes of Black Point several influential citizens, including banker Joseph C. Palmer, explorer John Charles Frémont, and editor James Brooks of the *Golden Era*, a popular literary newspaper, built





VAL MARITIME MUSEUM, SAN FRANCISCO

# FRANCISCO'S AQUATIC PARK

*The three rowing clubs at the foot of Van Ness Avenue in 1918. From left to right, the San Francisco Rowing Club, Dolphin Rowing Club, and South End Rowing Club. The Belt Line Railroad trestle had been completed in 1913.*

homes in the hope that they could establish title to the property through possession. Meanwhile, Black Point Cove was developed into the industrial center of the young city. The first to build on the shores of the cove was entrepreneur John Bensley. In 1857 Bensley's firm, the San Francisco Water Company, established San Francisco's first permanent system of water supply by constructing a redwood flume to carry fresh water from Lobos Creek near the Golden Gate along the coast and bay shore to a small wood frame pump station erected on the beach of Black Point Cove. The pumps conveyed the water to reservoirs on nearby Russian Hill.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the firm of Heynemann, Pick, and Company built a substantial industrial complex of wood and brick

structures next to the pump station to house California's first woolen mill.

More industry came to the cove in 1867, when San Francisco businessman and politician Thomas Henry Selby built a large smelter on its eastern shore. The pump station, the woolen mill, and the Selby smelter gave the cove's shoreline a decidedly industrial character. Meanwhile, the residents of Black Point had been dispossessed. Troops occupying and fortifying that spot in 1863 established a military post which would ultimately be called Fort Mason. The low-lying cove, however, was not required for defensive purposes and the businesses along its shore were allowed to stay. In 1869, when the military finally decided to evict the "squatting" industries, substantial opposition mounted, and on July 1, 1870, Congress reduced the size of the military reservation, excluding the cove and placing the land in the hands of the

private speculators who occupied it.

As the century drew to a close, however, nearly all of the original businesses left the area. In 1885 Selby closed the smelter, citing a need for adequate rail service, deep water frontage, and room for expansion. Within the year it had relocated to the eastern shores of San Francisco Bay. Four years later, in 1889, the woolen mill folded, victim of intense competition from eastern mills and racist anti-Chinese agitators who had successfully campaigned against the mill's almost exclusive use of Chinese workers. By the turn of the century only the pump station, rebuilt and enlarged as part of the new Spring Valley Water Company, and the chocolate manufacturing D. Ghirardelli Company, which had purchased the abandoned woolen mill buildings in 1894, remained.

The cove was partially filled in 1858 to accommodate its industrial users; later fill along the eastern and



*Black Point Cove in the 1860s. The sluice visible in the foreground carried water to the San Francisco Water Company's pumping station to the right of the woolen mill. Smallscale filling to even out the jagged shoreline is visible in front of the mill.*

western edges cut the area of the cove in half. The despoliation of the cove's sand beach continued in 1906 after the disastrous earthquake and fire when Black Point Cove was designated as a dump site for debris from the devastated urban core. Fifteen thousand truckloads of broken brick, stone, and burnt rubble completely obliterated the beach.<sup>3</sup> The last major episode of fill at the cove was the result of preparations for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition. In 1913 backers of the proposed exposition, anxious to connect the waterfront Belt Line Railroad to the exposition site west of Black Point, applied for and received permission to extend the line across the cove. An elevated trestle was built through the middle of the cove and a railroad tunnel was excavated through Black Point; its tailings were dumped alongside the trestle. As the Belt Line extension went into operation in 1914, the California Board of Harbor Commissioners, which had jurisdiction over waterfront development, encouraged further filling of the cove. According to the harbor commission-

ers, "by this means a large new waterfront area of desirable flat land has been made more available for factory and other commercial uses."<sup>4</sup>



The destruction of Black Point Cove was accomplished despite a long tradition of public use and plans to preserve the area for recreation. The sheltered sand beach of Black Point Cove had attracted swimmers after the Gold Rush. While the most frequent users were no doubt employees of the nearby factories, an influx of "bathers" anxious to swim in the cove started a substantial trade for "bathhouses." The first bathhouse at Black Point Cove was probably built in the early 1860s. Later court testimony concerning the character of development in the area noted that the first bathhouse, as observed in 1863, was "a small shanty on the beach at the foot of Larkin Street . . . at the corner of Larkin and Beach streets there were steps leading down to the beach. . . ." The bathhouses were little more than changing areas where swimmers could safely leave their clothing and obtain a suit and towel, although some offered piers which extended into the deeper water of the cove. The bath-

houses were very popular; one account notes that between 6 and 9 a.m. "the bay at the cove below Black Point was dotted with bobbing heads. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

The San Francisco *City Directory* included its first formal bathhouse listing in 1871: Joseph Dunkley's "Sea Baths," later known as the "Neptune Bath-house." The Neptune Bath-house was a collection of mismatched frame structures perched by the water at the base of the steep sand cliff and accessible only by means of stairs leading down from Beach Street. A rickety wharf stretched out into the cove; from this a line was usually strung to hold drying towels and bathing suits. Business was good and as the popularity of the area increased other bathhouses opened. By 1883 two others were in operation at Black Point Cove: the Sheltered Cove Baths of Joseph J. Bamber, a former teamster, and the Golden Gate Sea Baths of Henry Frahm, a one-time "fish-curer." While the majority of bathhouse users were members of the working class, more affluent members of San Francisco society frequented them as well. The most famous was financier, merchant prince, and philanthropist William Chapman Ralston. After the setback which ended Ralston's ten-

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Black Point Cove in the 1870s, showing the San Francisco Water Company pump station on the far right, the Pioneer Woolen Mills (in a brick building constructed in 1863) at center right, the Neptune Baths in the center to the left of the factory complex, and the Selby smelter on the far left. The shore in front of the woolen mill has been extended northward, although the cove still retains a deep indentation which had disappeared by the time Aquatic Park was built.

ure as president of the Bank of California, he finished the day with a customary trip to the Neptune Bath-house. While swimming in the cove, he faltered and was pulled from the water dead. Though a coroner's jury ruled that he had over-exerted himself and died of a "pulmonary embolism," many felt that Ralston had chosen his favorite form of recreation to commit suicide.<sup>7</sup>

The demise of the popular Ralston notwithstanding, the bathhouses prospered through the 1880s, expanding to meet an ever-increasing use. On Sunday afternoons the dozens of small bathhouses or changing rooms which had sprung up on the sand would be in use, and hundreds of bathers would dot the beach with their picnic lunches between dips into the icy bay waters. Unfortunately the boom was brief. By the 1890s all of the bathhouses had closed, outclassed by new, enclosed salt-water bathhouses such as the Lurline, Crystal, and Sutro Baths. By 1895, wrote one reporter, the weather-beaten, abandoned bathhouses seemed to possess "an air of despondent regret over their desertion. The future does not seem to hold out much promise for the little beach at Black Point as a swimming resort. Its glories are of the past and

are fading as the bath-houses are crumbling. . . ."<sup>8</sup> Yet there were hardy swimmers who disdained the heated comforts of indoor baths and who braved the harsh industrial landscape of Black Point Cove. They were the rugged members of the Dolphin, South End, and Ariel Rowing and Swimming Clubs.

Established in the 1870s by German-speaking working-class men as *turnvereins*, the three clubs had evolved into athletic organizations by the advent of the twentieth century. Members of the clubs had undoubtedly swum in Black Point Cove prior to the closure of the bathhouses. When continued industrialization and waterfront development south of Market Street forced the clubs to relocate during the 1890s, their members looked to Black Point Cove. By 1900 the clubhouses of the South End Rowing Club and the Dolphin Club stood at the foot of Van Ness Avenue in the cove. These had been barged into place, and were soon joined by the Ariel Club structure.<sup>9</sup> The strong ties to aquatic sport evidenced by each club's activities were to be tested once again at the new site, however, as the industrialization of Black Point Cove threatened the last spot left on the waterfront for the clubs to go.

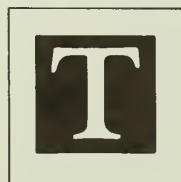
The clubs had arrived at a cove already altered and slated for further change. As the beach was ruined by the dumping of earthquake debris and by the construction of the Belt Line Railroad extension, club members began to lobby actively for the preservation of the cove for recreational purposes. It was not a new idea. As early as 1866 landscape architect and urban planner Frederick Law Olmsted had proposed a waterfront park at Black Point Cove. In a report to the Board of Supervisors Olmsted had outlined a plan for "Public Pleasure Grounds" throughout the city which envisioned Black Point Cove as a "municipal landing place and marine parade" for dignitaries and foreign representatives:

*Here there should be a suitable landing quay and a plaza, with a close and thick plantation of evergreens on the west side, with banks of shrubs and flowers. The plaza or parade should be open and large enough to be used as a drill ground by a battery of artillery or a regiment of infantry, with some standing room and seats for spectators. It should also contain an elegant pavilion for the accommodation of committees of reception and their guests and should be decorated with flagstuffs, marine trophies, and eventually with monuments to naval heroes, discoverers and explorers. It should not,*



however, be very large or fitted for extended ceremonies, being considered rather as the sea-gate of the city rather than a place of entertainment for its guests.<sup>10</sup>

Olmsted's plan for Black Point Cove was never realized, probably because of the firmly entrenched industries and the then unsettled question of military ownership.



he failure of the Olmsted plan did not discourage later schemes. In 1905, noted planner Daniel Hudson Burn-

ham proposed a park at Black Point Cove. Burnham's plan was more restrained than Olmsted's, seeking rather to preserve the cove as open space. It was, however, part of a larger plan to redesign San Francisco along new lines urged by a citizens' committee headed by former mayor James Duval Phelan. The committee, known as the Association for the Improvement and Adornment of San Francisco, hoped to use urban planning as an impetus for political change in a city ruled by fighting factions of labor and capital and presided over by ruthless "bosses."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, at Black Point Cove working class "labor" was clashing with industrial capitalism to preserve the

recreational enclave. The status quo remained unchanged, though, since commercial opposition prevented the Burnham plan from being adopted.

Meanwhile rowing and swimming club members wishing to save Black Point Cove had been working quietly behind the scenes. With the failure of the Burnham plan, they formed the Aquatic Park Improvement Association to lobby actively. In April of 1909 the association presented a cost estimate for a proposed recreational development to the board of supervisors along with a request that the proposition be submitted to the voters as a bond issue.<sup>12</sup> The public rejected the concept that November; another proposal was rejected in 1912. Yet the 1912 defeat marked a turning point, because a majority voted for the park, although the votes fell short of the required two-thirds. This cheered the Aquatic Park Improvement Association's members, who would continue to push for the park under a different mantle.<sup>13</sup> Some individual members of the South End Rowing Club at the same time attempted to arrange for a transfer of land. The Southern Pacific Railroad had purchased a large portion of the cove in hopes of developing it, only to find that the area was too small unless

extensive filling took place. The rowing club members hoped to convince the board of supervisors to offer the railroad more desirable, accessible land south of Market Street in exchange for Black Point Cove. Negotiations faltered, however, and by 1913 the Belt Line Railroad extension had filled much of the cove.

The continued filling of the cove angered the membership of the San Francisco Recreation League, an organization dedicated to establishing public enclaves for recreational use. Beginning in 1913 the recreation league spearheaded the fight for an aquatic park, obtaining the support of United States Congressman Julius Kahn and various members of the board of supervisors. Supervisor McLaren presented a resolution to the board on March 13, 1914, calling for the preservation of Black Point Cove as the "site of the proposed aquatic park."<sup>14</sup> At the same time, however, an application for a permit to fill the cove entirely filed by the harbor commissioners sat before the board of supervisors. In a key test of the aquatic park proposal, McLaren's resolution was approved and the harbor commissioners were denied a permit. The adopted resolution stated that there was nowhere else "on the shore line of San Francisco suitable for an aquatic park or





*The Dolphin Club's junior crew, winners of the Bay Area rowing championship on April 16, 1916.*

for swimming, boating or fishing" and called for the cessation of development at the site. It did not call for the reversal of damage already done:

*Be it resolved by the Board of Supervisors that we invite the cooperation of the citizens of San Francisco who are interested in the moral and physical welfare of the citizens of the State of California in the creation of a sentiment that will arrest this march of commercialism and attempted threat of public rights. . . .*<sup>15</sup>

The McLaren resolution marked the turning point in the struggle to create an aquatic park. Momentum now moved quickly toward fulfilling the first goal, setting aside Black Point Cove from commercial development and placing it in public stewardship. In 1916 the city assessed lands in Black Point Cove; various parcels, some belonging to the Southern Pacific Railroad, some state tidelands, and others belonging to various small businesses on the cove's shore, were all appraised. The largest parcel, nearly one-third of the cove, was held by the Southern Pacific, which had little use for the limited area of the cove. The possibility of exchanging lands south of Market Street, which the railroad wanted, for the Black Point Cove property was revived at this time.

There was still some opposition, though. Public hearings before the board of supervisors introduced an alternative plan to use the recently closed Panama Pacific International Exposition's marina as an aquatic park. Proponents of this idea argued that "we already have an aquatic park fronting on the Marina and that this would be a duplication." Black Point Cove partisans pointed out in response that Black Point provided a sheltered locale with potential for development for swimming and rowing and that there was a long tradition of aquatic recreation at the site. The newly developed yacht harbor on the Marina, on the other hand, had been recently reclaimed from marshlands.

Opposition to setting aside Black Point Cove also came from commercial interests who noted that an extension of Van Ness Avenue to the water and its subsequent development as "another Market Street, another commercial artery of San Francisco" could not happen if the cove was made into an aquatic park. A park was not suitable, they stated, because "that location will be required for ferries in the future when the people of San Francisco may be taken for recreation and pleasure to the attractive places in Marin County." Edward Scully, a member

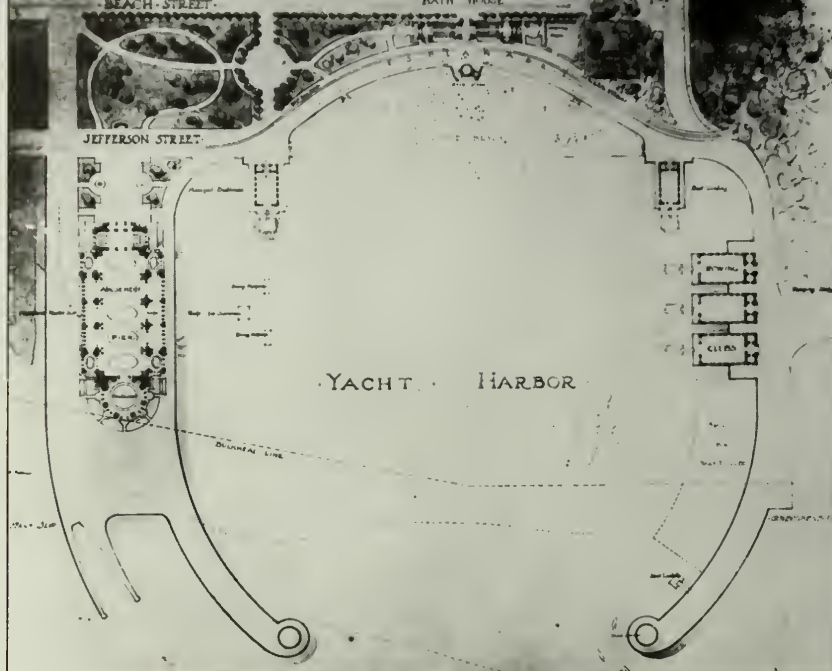
of the South End Rowing Club, countered with testimony that the recreational use of the cove would actually encourage commercial growth in the surrounding area as large crowds flocked to the park, which would "keep San Franciscans in this city."<sup>16</sup>

**S**upport of the park idea eventually outweighed the opposition as a diverse array of public groups, including the Congress of Mothers, North Beach Promotion Association, the Olympic Club, the League of Improvement Clubs, and the San Francisco Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, all joined to lobby on behalf of the aquatic park proposal. In mid-1917 the board of supervisors voted to trade undeveloped city-owned lands south of Market Street to the Southern Pacific Railroad for its one-third of Black Point Cove. In November of the same year Southern Pacific approved the deal and the land transfer took place. The city received \$392,073 to compensate for the fact that the Black Point Cove property was "lesser valued."<sup>17</sup>

Eager to acquire the other two-thirds of the cove, the board of supervisors voted in December 1917 to

*Bakewell, Brown, and Bauer's plan for Aquatic Park. The pier on the right was constructed and is still used for fishing and strolling; plans for the one on the left were scrapped when the bond issue which would have paid for it failed.*

*(Far right) The park site in 1925, with the Dolphin Rowing Club visible in the background.*



allocate funds for the purchase of additional land. Proposals to spend the \$392,000 from Southern Pacific for the development of the aquatic park were tabled, however, as the supervisors emphasized acquiring the land. Between 1918 and 1928 a series of piecemeal purchases brought the remaining Black Point Cove land into the public domain.

Planning for the proposed park began in 1920 when San Francisco Civil Engineer John Punnett was directed to prepare a conceptual basis for more detailed plans to be drafted by architects and engineers in an open competition.<sup>18</sup> More than just a conceptual basis, the Punnett plan proposed no major restoration of the original contours of Black Point Cove but was aimed at intensive recreational development. Subsequent plans followed these lines rather than the quite different concepts which later won the open competition.<sup>19</sup> Actual site development also began in 1920 with the grading of the cove's shoreline between Van Ness Avenue and Larkin Street. In the next year the Belt Line trestle was relocated closer inland, freeing much of the cove's remaining open water space from encroaching development.

In 1922 the board of supervisors placed the aquatic park site under

the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Board of Park Commissioners, which promptly appointed the firm of Bakewell, Brown, and Bauer as architects for the project and directed them to prepare a prospectus and plans.<sup>20</sup> The Bakewell, Brown, and Bauer plan was completed in 1923 and quickly approved by the park commissioners. Reminiscent of the Punnett plan, the new design called for the extensive recreational development of Black Point Cove. Curving concrete piers would arc out into the bay, enclosing the waters of the cove; inside, on broad sand beaches and expanses of lawn would be "various buildings, bathhouses, boat-landings . . . driveways, approaches, and planting and landscaping the entire park area. . . ." <sup>21</sup> If completed, the Bakewell, Brown, and Bauer plan would have cost almost two million dollars and would have rendered the cove practically unrecognizable.

A bond issue intended to finance the project was presented to the voters in November 1928. Advertisements in favor of the issue noted that "People Demand and Deserve A Safe Place to SWIM, ROW, FISH in the Heart of San Francisco" and urged passage to "Make the Bay A Safe Place to Play."<sup>22</sup> Hopeful that the bond issue would pass, the

board of supervisors appropriated \$100,000 to build one of the enclosing piers envisioned in the Punnett and Bakewell, Brown, and Bauer plans.<sup>23</sup> The supervisors' optimism was misplaced, however. The bond issue failed. Nevertheless the appropriation for the enclosing "recreation pier" had been made, and the commitment would be met. Construction was delayed by the onset of the worldwide economic depression in 1929, but work began in earnest in 1931.

Prior to 1931 work at the site had included relocating the three rowing and swimming clubhouses from the foot of Van Ness Avenue to the foot of Polk in 1927 (they would be moved again to their present location at the foot of Hyde Street in 1938). With the clubhouses out of the way, Van Ness Avenue was extended over landfill bordering the western edge of the cove to the very tip of Black Point. This paved the way for pier construction in 1931. Commencing on August 17, a crew of laborers cleaned the park site, working beside a large sign which proclaimed "Site of San Francisco's AQUATIC PARK To Be Erected By The Park Commissioners For The People of San Francisco." Cribbing salvaged from other construction projects was stockpiled at the foot





of Van Ness Avenue and a crude concrete and rubble seawall was built against the exposed dirt bank of the road. Workmen for the Healy-Tibbetts Construction Company, under contract to the city to build the pier, began work late in the year and by December the first half of the reinforced concrete pier was in place, sweeping out into the bay and then curving in to enclose the indented shoreline of the cove. The pier remained only half complete until 1933, though; final costs for the project were more than half again what the supervisors had allotted, and additional funds were not available.

For the remainder of 1931 and 1932 a limited amount of work kept the project alive. While the city fathers waited for more money, workers graded and stockpiled granite cobblestones which had been trucked to the park site from resurfaced San Francisco streets. Borrowed tools and salvaged materials (such as the cobblestones) allowed what work there was to continue. Completion of the park according to the Bakewell, Brown, and Bauer plan would require the construction of another enclosing "recreation pier" running offshore from the foot of Hyde Street as well as the erection of various buildings and the creation of green lawns and sand

beaches. The millions of dollars needed were clearly beyond the fiscal resources of the City of San Francisco. Unless support from private, state, or federal government sources was obtained, the aquatic park project was doomed.

**P**ark backers took heart from the passage of the National Recovery Act in 1933, believing that money would now be made available by the federal government. The board of supervisors applied for NRA funds for a number of civil projects, including the completion of the city's aging sewer system and the development of Black Point Cove as an aquatic park, "one of the most important recreational developments in the City and County."<sup>24</sup> The board of supervisors pledged \$1.6 million from any forthcoming NRA funds to the aquatic park project and placed a proposal on the ballot to raise additional funds to build

*boat houses for rowing clubs, the creation of a bathing beach, park and playground areas, a concrete wharf to facilitate auto parking, bath-houses, convenience stations, service buildings, gymnasiums,*

*hand ball courts, shower and locker rooms, solariums, and club quarters.*<sup>25</sup>

The construction of the aquatic park and other NRA sponsored projects would create six thousand jobs, and the supervisors hoped this prospect would win enough support among the unemployed to assure passage of the bond issue. Other bond issues passed in November, but the aquatic park proposal was defeated. The board of supervisors still sought to realize the obvious benefits of setting aside the last area of open bay waterfront for recreational uses, however. Construction limped along at Black Point Cove through 1934 and 1935, aided in part by State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA) funds and private donations. Another setback came when the National Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional in 1934. Hope revived, however, with the creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal the following year. A proposal submitted to the WPA in late 1935 finally hit the mark. On December 19, 1935 the Works Progress Administration announced that it would build San Francisco's Aquatic Park.

The dream of an aquatic park which had been born decades before was finally to be carried into reality.

*Aquatic Park under construction in March, 1938. The shoreline extends into the Bay, and the relocated railroad track is visible just inland from the bathhouse construction.*

*(Far right) Aquatic Park on Dedication Day, 1939.*



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, SAN FRANCISCO

The board of supervisors appointed architect John Punnett, who had drafted the first plans for the park in 1920, to prepare the final site plan. San Francisco City Architect William A. Mooser III was selected to design the structures in the park. Mooser's appointment was practically traditional: his father, William A. Mooser II, had designed two structures at Black Point Cove, the D. Ghirardelli and Company factory and the California Fruit Cannery Association warehouse. Mooser's grandfather, William A. Mooser, had designed the Pioneer Woolen Mill's brick buildings in 1863. Hence the designs and buildings of three generations of Moosers would ultimately stand on the shores of Black Point Cove. If Mooser's selection as architect was traditional, however, the design for the aquatic park buildings was not. Bold, sweeping lines, curved façades of sheer white walls, stainless steel railings, and porthole windows combined with tiered levels to create a nautical motif in the contemporary "streamlined moderne" style.

Even as the plans were being drafted, WPA crews hired from the ranks of San Francisco's jobless began work. The first major job was the construction of a stepped granite cobblestone seawall along the land-

filled shoreline of Black Point Cove, sweeping in a curve that mirrored that of the recreation pier at the foot of Van Ness Avenue. Foundations for six reinforced concrete structures were poured; one was a large bathhouse, three were small restroom/lifeguard station/convenience stands, the others were two speaker towers to broadcast sports events in the cove to the anticipated crowds of bathers and spectators. Punnett's plans called for other buildings, but limited funds dictated that the priority for construction was the bathhouse, which would accommodate five thousand bathers. Awaiting future appropriations were a large new building to house the South End, Dolphin, and Ariel rowing and swimming clubs, a bandstand, and expansively landscaped grounds.

When the park was dedicated in 1939 the results, though limited, pleased everyone. According to WPA officials:

*The finished park, protected by the great curve of the municipal pier . . . fills completely the need for a central water playground. Here one may bathe, swim, canoe, or sail . . . Here thousands of happy youngsters find protected playground in the water and on the shore. Here thousands of wearied adults may sink into warm, embracing sand, content to just lie and relax, and revel in the*

*beauties spread before them.*<sup>26</sup>

The bathhouse was the crowning achievement of Aquatic Park, its nautical design decorated by Federal Arts Program artists Hilaire Hiler, Sargent Claude Johnson, Beniamino Bufano, Richard Ayer and a bevy of assistants. It featured terrazzo floors laid to resemble shoal charts, murals of "undersea life," and softly shaped sculptures of sea creatures. The "moderne" motif was matched by the modernity of the structure, which contained a fully equipped hospital, complete with an operating room, showers activated by photoelectric "eyes," rooms where blasts of warm air and heat lamps dried swimmers, a full-service restaurant, a large concession stand, dressing rooms and lockers for five thousand men, women, and children, and exterior stadia which could seat over two thousand spectators. A small room on the top level of the building housed an announcer's booth, which was linked to the speaker stands on the park grounds. The public was evidently pleased; tens of thousands flocked to Aquatic Park on January 22, 1939 for its dedication. Over \$1.5 million in public funds had been poured into the project, and many San Franciscans, particularly those who had lobbied for the aquatic park concept,





were anxious to see what they had gotten for their money.

**T**hey soon learned, however, that the enthusiasm of Dedication Day masked problems which had plagued the project. Since the beginning of the park's construction, delays in acquiring approved plans and specifications, a lack of supervision, poorly defined goals, and costly mistakes had hindered progress. A WPA investigation later found that

*The project was under the supervision of at least six different WPA superintendents . . . yet few of those [superintendents] interviewed were able to give a concise description of the intended use of the building . . . One person remarked "It was like Topsy, it just grew" . . . Instances were cited showing that completed work had to be torn out because of changes made . . . It would be difficult to determine the exact locations of all of the final installations.<sup>27</sup>*

The first foundations poured for the bathhouse were inundated by the next high tide; new foundations were poured on two-foot-high pilings. Deliberate malfeasance had also been rampant. Municipal officials eager to find a paying use for

the bathhouse had leased the unfinished building to Kenneth and Leo Gordon, who operated a food concession in the Ferry Building. The Gordons were to create Aquatic Park Casino complete with bar, nightclub, and restaurant. Changes to accommodate the casino were made at the urging of city officials—at WPA expense. In 1937, when city officials toured the nearly completed building, it was suggested that the open area of the third floor, intended for use as a public lounge, should be made into a banquet facility. The officials accordingly ordered changes made. A completed wall was demolished and a small glass block pantry installed, adding months to the project schedule and thousands of dollars to the WPA's budget. A slow pace of work, estimated at three percent progress each month, and the presence of the Gordon concession angered WPA officials, who finally decided to withdraw from the project. At the end of 1938 the city had been notified that the City and County of San Francisco would have to assume the burden of completing the three smaller bathroom buildings and any additional construction. The park presented to the public in January of 1939 was incomplete.

Public dissatisfaction soon arose,

though not over the incomplete state of the park or the cost overruns and misadministration. The park was a success, with thousands flocking to the beach to enjoy a swim in the bay despite the fact the beaches had not yet received sand and were strewn with the broken bricks and rubble dumped in the cove in 1906. Even occasional overflows of polluted water from a nearby sewer failed to discourage bathers. What dismayed many was the near-complete takeover of the bathhouse by the Gordons. High prices discouraged most patrons, and public use of a building described by the city and the WPA as a "Palace for the Public" was frowned upon. A WPA investigator on one occasion observed a group of school boys bringing their lunches to the open veranda overlooking the cove, "They were ordered to leave by the concessioner." Throughout the bathhouse the Gordons had erected prominent signs stating "Private—Keep Out."<sup>28</sup> Additional controversy flared in 1940 when it was disclosed that the Gordons, angered over what they termed the city's failure to complete work in the building, had refused to pay rent for over a year.<sup>29</sup> Litigation and a storm of public outrage ensued, and by the end of 1940 the Gordons had been ousted from the bathhouse and the

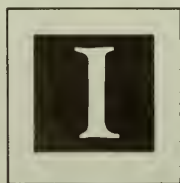
*Critics described the bathhouse as "built from the outside in." One of the most egregious examples of vacillating plans was the demolition of the east wall of the third floor and the addition of a glass-block pantry to accommodate private concessioners' desire to use the third floor as a banquet room rather than the public lounge for which it had been originally intended.*



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doors padlocked. The beach, enriched with sand brought from excavations at Union Square to build an underground parking garage, remained open and popular until the end of 1941.

In the aftermath of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, a wave of fear swept the Pacific Coast. Military forces in California, Oregon, and Washington were placed on alert and emergency defenses were hastily thrown up. Most were small anti-aircraft batteries. Embarrassed city officials anxious to unload their "white elephant" turned over the padlocked bathhouse to the Army for use as the headquarters for anti-aircraft defense on the Pacific Coast. In early 1942 troops occupied the park, living in the bathhouse, closing the beach, and training in preparation for war. Thus the long-awaited Aquatic Park dream, fulfilled in 1939, died as the former military reservation at Black Point Cove reverted to its original purpose.



In 1948 the military returned the land to the city and Aquatic Park once again became a reality. The dream had been largely forgotten, though.

The surrounding area remained industrial, and the bathhouse, closed to the public, awaited a purpose. That year the board of supervisors turned some portions of the building over to the newly created San Francisco Senior Center. Various museum uses for the building had also been proposed through the years; one plan called for moving in exhibits from the 1939 World's Fair Golden Gate International Exposition held on Treasure Island. The most appropriate use, however, was found by a young man who first came to Aquatic Park as a patron of the Gordons' casino. Karl Kortum, a Petaluma chicken rancher, had early been infected with a love for ships and the sea. Kortum envisioned the bathhouse filled with maritime exhibits and a fleet of historic vessels moored in the cove. The idea caught on, and in 1951 the San Francisco Maritime Museum was opened in the bathhouse. Within a few years the State of California opened the San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park in the cove at the foot of Hyde Street. Both the museum and the historic ships remain in the park today as part of the popular National Maritime Museum.

The open-air qualities which had attracted the first bathers to the cove in the 1860s continued to bring suc-

ceeding generations. The number of bathers began to decline, however, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, although new forms of recreation attracted others. Dilapidated factories and warehouses were renovated to become popular shopping and restaurant facilities. Today hundreds of thousands visit The Cannery, Ghirardelli Square, and the other attractions along San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf. Aquatic Park is now a unit of the National Park Service's Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which also administers the National Maritime Museum. Under National Park Service stewardship the buildings and the faded Depression artworks are being restored. In 1984 Aquatic Park was listed on the prestigious National Register of Historic Places as a historic property of national importance; future plans call for completely restoring the bathhouse to its original function.<sup>30</sup> A renaissance of the dream is apparent, supported by the National Park Service, by the last two swimming and rowing clubs, the Dolphin and South End clubs, and by the crowds who flock to the beach on warm days, drawn to the park and its promise of individual interaction with the all-surrounding sea. □

See notes on page 312.



by Stephen A. Haller

# FROM THE OUTSIDE IN: ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN THE BATHHOUSE



It has been suggested that the "streamline-moderne" style of architecture blending geometric functional shapes with softer aerodynamic curves and lines was a manifestation of hope for a better future in the midst of hard times.<sup>1</sup> Nowhere was this aesthetic better expressed than in the bathhouse at Aquatic Park. Although a critic at a WPA investigation suggested—probably accurately—that the bathhouse had been "built from the outside in" without much serious study of its intended use,<sup>2</sup> it functions very well simply as a grand public monument to be admired both from the outside and inside without necessarily "doing" anything. The curvilinear shape of the building with its recessed upper stories purposefully recreates the bridge of an ocean liner. The effect is enhanced by tubular steel railings, porthole windows, rope set into the wall plaster, funnel-like ventilators, and a flagpole in the form of a ship's mast. It is appropriate that among the displays in the lobby is a large model of the 1936 liner *Queen Mary*.

But the architecture is only one part of the bathhouse's visual impact. The WPA-sponsored artwork inside and out is an integral part of the whole. As New Deal art in California, it is neither the first nor the last, but it is among the most distinctive because of its expressionist nature. In contrast to the vast majority of federally sponsored artists in

*Sub-aqueous life teems on the walls of the bathhouse.*

California, who painted scenes of social and working life in a realistic manner, the artists who worked on the Aquatic Park bathhouse expressed themselves in a surrealist, abstract, gently flowing style. It is ironic indeed that these artworks, so apolitical when compared with the controversial murals at San Francisco's Coit Tower or Rincon Annex Post Office, became an effective political vehicle when the artists ran head-on into the proposed private use of the building as the Aquatic Park Casino, a pricey restaurant. Led by sculptor Beniamino Bufano, the outraged artists forced an investigation into the entire project which eventually halted the private use of the public building.

Bufano's tangible legacy remains in the form of two smoothly polished statues, a seal and a toad, on either end of the veranda. The National Park Service would like to bring Bufano's *Penguin*, created for Aquatic Park and now standing in Maritime Plaza, back to its original place in the park. Bufano's two animals face a bright mosaic of abstract fish on the veranda wall. It was executed by Sargent Claude Johnson, one of a handful of black artists on the WPA rolls. Johnson also did the flowing carvings in green slate over the main entrance which depict life and work by the water.

In charge of all the artists at the bathhouse was Hilaire Hiler, who had returned to take a job with the WPA after years of self-imposed exile in the American expatriate community of

between-the-wars Paris. All the Aquatic Park artists, Hiler included, were exceptions to the tendency among California artists to welcome the "return to figurative art" as a validation of their own rejection of "modernism."<sup>3</sup> In contrast to the lack of a plan for its use which characterized the construction of the building and brought on the WPA investigation, it is apparent that the design for its decoration adhered consistently to consideration of the "function of the building . . . , its uses and associations, and at no point depart[ed] from them."<sup>4</sup>

The highlight of the building decoration is Hiler's mural of underwater life. Curvaceous and brightly colored subaqueous forms frolic on the walls among the submerged ruins of the lost continents of Mu and Atlantis. Henry Miller once wrote, "Though the decor was distinctly Freudian, it was also gay, stimulating, and superlatively healthy."<sup>5</sup> The walls merge into subtly colored marble wainscoting and a terrazzo floor that represents a shoal chart of San Francisco Bay. The grandeur of this open room with its bay view was enhanced by its emptiness, an impression which is strikingly apparent in photographs although it is now altered by the collection of nautical exhibits.

The Aquatic Park bathhouse has survived almost fifty years of neglect, attention, ridicule, and admiration. In a roundabout fashion, it has now returned to the use for which it was originally intended. It is once again a public building with a distinctly nautical theme and a grand veranda on San Francisco's magnificent bay. □

*See notes on page 313.*

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# PHILANTHROPIO

*a* cultured, gentle woman, Phoebe Apperson Hearst stands in marked contrast to her kindly but unrefined mining entrepreneur husband, George, and their aggressive, empire-building only child, William Randolph Hearst. During her lifetime she donated some twenty-one million dollars to free libraries, the kindergarten movement, the University of California at Berkeley, and other institutions such as hospitals, orphanages, and service clubs.<sup>1</sup> Institutions and buildings shaped by her influence, many bearing her name, still stand from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco, but Phoebe Hearst herself is not well remembered.

Obscured by popular fascination with William and, more recently, his granddaughter Patty, Phoebe has been overlooked by biographers with the exception of Winifred Black Bonfils.<sup>2</sup> Known to readers of the *San Francisco Examiner* under the *nom de plume* of "Annie Laurie," she rushed a 54,000 word essay to completion at the request of William upon his mother's death in 1919.<sup>3</sup> Hand set and bound in Germany in a limited, lavish edition, the work was presented by her son to his friends. As his most authoritative biographer, W.A. Swanberg, suggests, "Phoebe Hearst, whose career deserved the attention of a conscientious biographer, was instead commemorated by a handsome volume written in gushy prose, replete with errors."<sup>4</sup> If Mrs. Hearst's death revealed what the same author calls "the passing of California's greatest lady and one of the nation's most remarkable

women," it is certainly appropriate to examine her contributions to education in the state and the nation, especially in view of the growing interest in the history of women in America.<sup>5</sup>

The daughter of Randolph and Drucilla Apperson, a prosperous slave-owning farm family, Phoebe (the name was spelled "Phebe" until later in her life) was born on December 3, 1842, in rural Franklin County, Missouri. Educated in the county schools and under a private governess in St. Louis, blue-eyed, pretty, petite Phoebe was briefly a school teacher in her native state. In addition to precise English she spoke passable French. Her courtship by tall, rugged George Hearst, who had received only two-and-a-half years of formal education, must have seemed a curious contradiction to those who witnessed it. A neighbor from Phoebe's childhood, Hearst had returned to the family farm after ten years in the mining camps of California and Nevada, where he had struck it rich with the Ophir Mine in Nevada's Comstock Lode. Phoebe married her miner suitor, over the apparent objections of her parents, at Steelville, Missouri on June 15, 1862. She was nineteen. Her husband was then forty-one.<sup>6</sup>

While the Civil War consumed the nation's attention, the newlywed Hearsts left for California. Properly settled at the Stevenson House, a family hotel in San Francisco, Phoebe gave birth to their son on April 29, 1863. Shortly thereafter, Hearst moved his young family into a brick house purchased on fashionable Rincon Hill in the city. The mining business kept her husband away

much of the time, leaving Phoebe to devote most of her energy to raising and educating Willie, as he was affectionately known. A loving, indulgent, but domineering mother, Mrs. Hearst patiently exposed young Willie to a public and private education, including study with special tutors and a culturally enlightening tour of Europe when the boy was ten years old. One of many foreign excursions she would eventually undertake, the grand tour of the continent was a socially expected adventure for the new rich of the Gilded Age, a status symbol of much importance. Although this convention may have influenced Phoebe's decision to spend a year-and-a-half abroad in the early 1870s, she also was seeking for herself and her son the cultural sophistication and knowledge that only the museums, art galleries, and cathedrals of the Old World could offer.<sup>7</sup> According to Cora Older, the wife of Fremont Older, who edited one of William Hearst's San Francisco newspapers for over a decade, "she poured the best of herself and the best of all that there was in Europe" into her son's ten-year-old mind.<sup>8</sup> At the same time that Phoebe pursued culture abroad, she introduced it into her home in San Francisco. A newly acquired mansion on Van Ness Avenue was equipped with a gallery containing her European art and statuary treasures. The family home also became a site for the entertainment of painters, musicians, writers, and local society matrons. The young Mrs. Hearst was embarking on a cultural career that would culminate in the public opening of her extensive art collection in 1916 at the Palace of

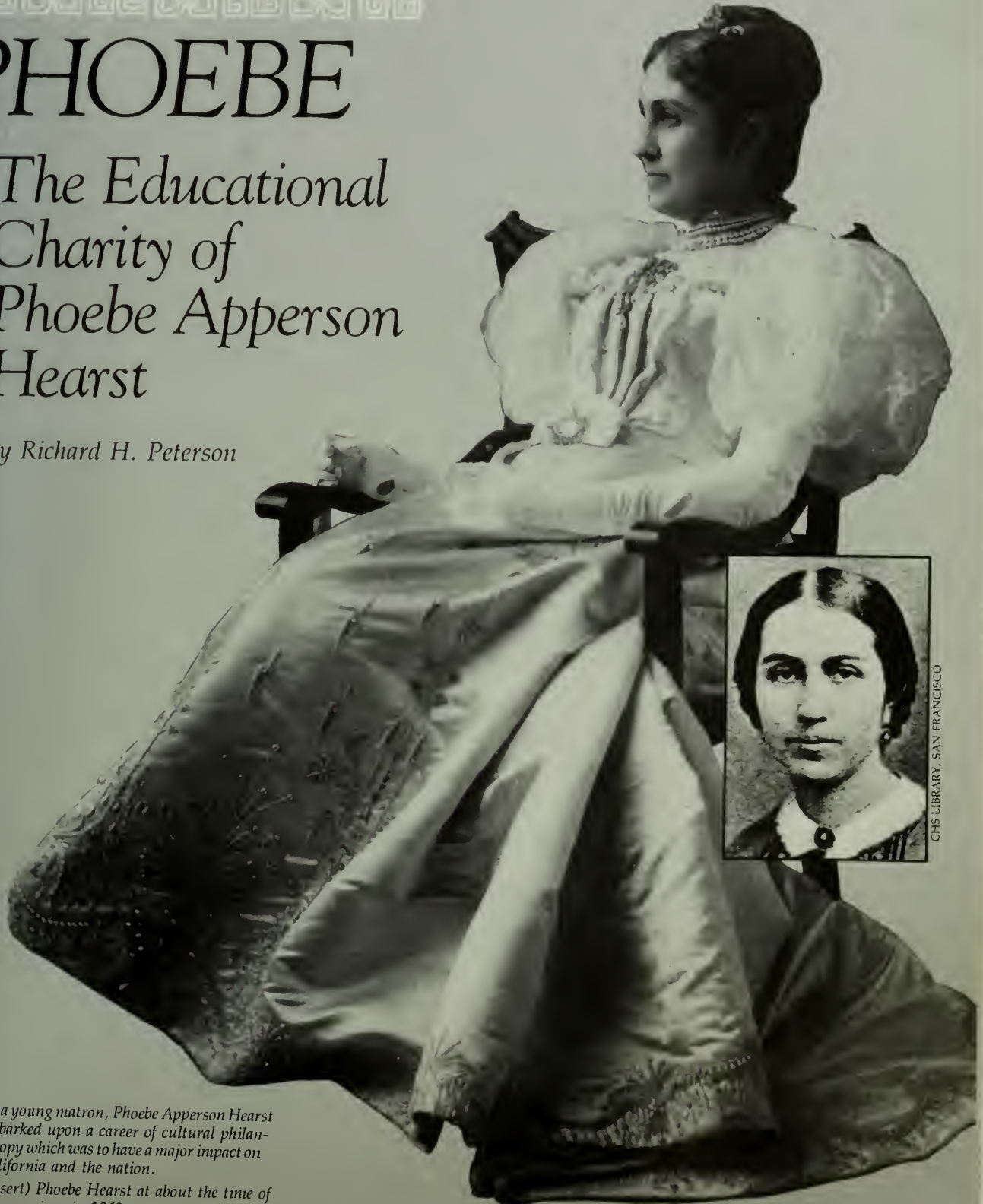




# PHOEBE

## *The Educational Charity of Phoebe Apperson Hearst*

*by Richard H. Peterson*



*As a young matron, Phoebe Apperson Hearst embarked upon a career of cultural philanthropy which was to have a major impact on California and the nation.*

*(Insert) Phoebe Hearst at about the time of her marriage in 1863.*

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Fine Arts. Although her husband preferred a good poker game to a drawing room discussion of the paintings of the pre-Raphaelites or the writings of Oscar Wilde, he nonetheless financed her cultural interests, especially as his mining properties, including the Ontario in Utah, the Homestake in South Dakota, and the Anaconda in Montana, returned enormous profits in the 1870s and 1880s. He and his partners, the San Francisco lawyer-investors James Ben Ali Haggin and Lloyd Tevis, had the good fortune to control three of the most productive mines in the country.<sup>9</sup>

Much to Phoebe's disappointment, her son did not complete the prestigious education for which she had so carefully prepared him. William was expelled from Harvard during his junior year in 1885 for misbehavior. His father, who had purchased the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1880 in the process of securing a seat in the so-called Millionaires' Club, turned the financially troubled paper over to the young man, thereby launching a controversial and influential career.<sup>10</sup> Phoebe, meanwhile, was already expanding her interests beyond the doting attention she had lavished on her son. Even before his ill-fated college car-

eer began, she was quietly inquiring about poor but academically promising young men in San Francisco and then financially subsidizing their education. Judging by the letters of gratitude she received from individual students, this was a practice she continued throughout her life.<sup>11</sup>

**a**n early supporter of the kindergarten movement in the United States, Phoebe helped Sarah B. Cooper, known for her educational work on behalf of slum children in San Francisco's crime-laden Barbary Coast district, maintain free kindergartens in the city long before they were officially incorporated into the public school system. In 1883, she financed a building that housed several kindergarten classes and Cooper's Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, which Phoebe served as honorary president. Although she was a major financial donor, the San Francisco kindergarten movement also received support and leadership from other members of the city's social and economic elite who hoped "to instill in the children of the poor a commitment to work and morality which would make them productive citizens rather than a threat to society."<sup>12</sup> Mrs. Hearst's dedication to educational philanthropy among her various charities would characterize the rest of her life.

Phoebe's husband, who claimed to have been "always fond of politics," turned his attention to high public office like other wealthy businessmen of the Gilded Age. Unsuccessful in a bid to capture the Democratic nomination for California's

governor in 1882, he was chosen by the successful candidate, Governor George Stoneman, to fill the unexpired term of United States Senator John Miller when the latter died in March, 1886.<sup>13</sup> In January, 1887, Hearst was elected to a full term in the Senate by the California legislature.<sup>14</sup> While living in Washington, D.C. as a senator's wife, Phoebe joined the select social circle, entertained lavishly, and continued her philanthropic crusade on behalf of education. The latter apparently had little impact on her aging husband, who mentioned his wife only very briefly in the memoirs written a year before his death.<sup>15</sup> However, when he died on February 28, 1891, after four years of relatively undistinguished service in the Senate, he left his entire estate, conservatively valued at eighteen million dollars but probably worth more, to Phoebe. The forty-eight-year-old widow thus had substantial means with which to support her son's newspaper career and to finance charitable causes.<sup>16</sup>

In the nation's capital Phoebe had become known for such good works as founding three kindergartens, including one for black children. Her most important gift perhaps was the National Cathedral School for Girls, erected at a cost of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars on the outskirts of the city and presented to the district Episcopal diocese in 1896 as a means of providing a Christian education for the daughters of federal government employees. She also helped establish the Columbia Kindergarten Association, becoming its first president in 1893. It was organized to pressure Congress into enacting legislation bringing kindergartens into the public schools of the

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*William Randolph Hearst as a young adolescent.*

*Reading room of the free library in Lead, South Dakota, donated to the community by Phoebe Hearst as a Christmas gift in 1894.*

*The library provided both English and foreign language materials to serve the needs of immigrant workers at the Homestake Mine.*

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federal district. In 1897, she built the Phoebe Hearst Kindergarten Training School whose graduates were employed in free kindergartens throughout the country, but especially in the public schools of the federal district.<sup>17</sup>

**a**lthough concentrating much of her philanthropy on Washington, D.C., she did not overlook the educational needs of the mining camps where her husband had prospered. In Anaconda, Montana, she created the Hearst Free Library to serve mining families; she gave the library to the city in 1904.<sup>18</sup> When her husband died, Phoebe inherited majority ownership of the largest gold mine in the country, the Homestake in Lead, South Dakota. In 1894, she gave a complete library to the community as a Christmas gift. In addition to regular services, the library provided books, magazines, and newspapers in various foreign languages to serve the needs of immigrant workers and their families. Mrs. Hearst became the sole support of the new kindergarten in Lead, employing teachers who had graduated from her training school in the nation's capital. The local kindergarten introduced immigrant children to the English language and American culture, thereby making them more competitive with American-born youth in the public schools. In short, Phoebe promoted kindergarten education as a kind of head start in the Americanization of foreign-born students. She also helped the public schools in Lead by purchasing construction bonds at a low rate

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of interest.<sup>19</sup>

Before the turn of the century, Phoebe had returned to northern California, where she divided her time between San Francisco and Pleasanton, thirty miles to the east. There she resided in a palatial, Spanish-style villa named Hacienda del Pozo de Verona after a well she had brought from Verona, Italy, and placed in the patio. Her later years in California were identified especially with the state university at Berkeley. She was the first female regent of the University of California from 1897 until her death and was one of the most generous benefactors in its history. Her many contributions included a museum of anthropology and, as a tribute to her late husband, the Hearst Memorial Mining Building, constructed at a cost of six hundred and forty-five thousand dollars and presented to

the university in 1908. The additional expense of equipping and maintaining the building increased the cost to eight hundred thousand dollars. In addition, she gave the university the women's social and athletic center known as Hearst Hall, which was designed by the gifted Berkeley architect Bernard Maybeck. He also created a five-story, medieval manor house built of rubble stone and known as Wynthoon for Mrs. Hearst on the McCloud River in northern California.<sup>20</sup> Phoebe Hearst also helped to establish and subsidize the department of anthropology at Berkeley, which attracted such renowned scholars as Alfred Kroeber. She financed university archaeological expeditions to Italy, Greece, Mexico, South America, and Egypt, taking enough interest in them to visit the one in Egypt in 1905 and to set up temporary liv-

ing quarters in a small hospital at the diggings.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps most significantly, she underwrote—at a cost of two hundred thousand dollars—the international competition to determine a comprehensive architectural plan for the Berkeley campus which attracted over one hundred contestants. The winning design was submitted by Henri Jean Emile Bernard of Paris, France, who received the fifty-thousand-dollar first prize. Less spectacular gifts included books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, salaries for professors, laboratory equipment, concerts for students by the Metropolitan Opera Company, basketball and tennis courts, and swimming pools.<sup>22</sup> Mrs. Hearst also made financial donations to Lick Observatory. Established by the San Francisco entrepreneur James Lick, the astronomical facility near San Jose, California, had been presented to the University of California in 1888.<sup>23</sup>

Phoebe prevailed upon her son to support the university. William's first major contribution was the Greek Theater, dedicated in 1903 in ceremonies at which he was present. When Hearst Hall was destroyed by fire in 1922, William rebuilt it and named it the Phoebe A. Hearst Memorial Gymnasium in honor of his mother.<sup>24</sup> University president David P. Barrows said of the new building, "There could be no action so full of benefit to this great institution which for more than a quarter of a century had Mrs. Hearst's unceasing care and service."<sup>25</sup>

In addition to her commitment to the institution, Phoebe took a personal interest in the students, regularly meeting with female students and creating over twenty scholarships and a work-study program for

them. Female students who needed jobs to defray the cost of their education found employment as seamstresses in the Hearst Domestic Industries, established at the university in 1900.<sup>26</sup> At her Pleasanton home, she entertained the entire senior class each spring. According to the recollection of her nephew, Randolph Apperson, the students "would arrive by train . . . to be met by a swarm of surreys, coaches and automobiles which would take them to the ranch, where they enjoyed a barbecue picnic and other entertainments as guests of the shy, smiling Mrs. Hearst."<sup>27</sup> A co-ed, who fondly remembered her weekend in the country in 1917, left this interesting account of Hearst hospitality:

*After a sumptuous dinner, we followed the diminutive figure of our hostess back into the music room. She sat on a low dais before a Goblein tapestry, her old friends grouped about her. The walls were hung with some fine old tapestries and oil portraits. Then a guest arrived who was also a professional pianist being befriended by Mrs. Hearst. He played Chopin and Mozart until 10 o'clock, when Mrs. Hearst arose, bowed graciously, said goodnight, wished us all happy dreams, and told us we were on our own.*<sup>28</sup>

Phoebe's contributions to California education during her later years were not confined to the University of California at Berkeley, however. In 1902, she built a large, well-equipped kindergarten for over two hundred children on Union Street in San Francisco. When fire following the earthquake of 1906 destroyed the school, Mrs. Hearst replaced it with a bungalow-type building that accommodated a class of one hundred children.<sup>29</sup> According to

Carol Roland's excellent study of the California kindergarten movement, by 1906 she had contributed more than eighty thousand dollars to San Francisco kindergartens. She eventually established a trust fund for the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association which still exists and provides support for the Phoebe Hearst Preschool Learning Center in the city.<sup>30</sup> She also financed the development of a campus architectural plan for Mills College in Oakland, the first women's college established west of the Rockies. According to Aurelia Reinhart, Mills president from 1916 until 1943, Mrs. Hearst's gifts included an endowed chair in American history. Finally, she was for years a member of the advisory board of the California State Congress of Mothers, having established the parent national organization with Alice M. Birney in 1897. Later, it became the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, commonly called the PTA.<sup>31</sup>

On April 13, 1919, Mrs. Hearst died at her Pleasanton home from pneumonia following an attack of influenza, the global scourge of the immediate post-World War I years. Although William Randolph Hearst was named the chief beneficiary of his mother's eleven million dollar estate, the University of California was the only institution financially provided for in her will. It received her art collection and sixty thousand dollars in trust to continue the student scholarship program. Her total contributions to the university had exceeded one-and-a-half million dollars.<sup>32</sup> University president, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, whom she had helped to recruit from Cornell University, eulogized Phoebe Apperson Hearst as "a gentlewoman and pub-





Senator George Hearst about 1890.

Phoebe Apperson Hearst photographed during the last year of her life at her Pleasanton villa.

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lic servant—a blessing to her day and generation.”<sup>33</sup>

One must wonder why she was willing to donate so much of her inherited fortune to educational and other charities. It appears that her early though brief career as a teacher and her efforts on behalf of her son’s education created a lifelong interest in helping to educate the young. Philanthropy, whatever form it took, was also a respected social activity for the nouveaux riches of the Gilded Age. Indeed, wealthy businessmen often deferred to their wives in such matters, since charity and benevolent work were frequently regarded as the moral responsibility of women in the late nineteenth century. According to historian Roland, the so-called “charities explosion” in San Francisco during the late 1870s and 1880s can be attributed to the leadership of Phoebe Hearst, Mary Crocker, and Jane Stanford, socially prominent wives of eminently successful entrepreneurs.<sup>34</sup>

The noted business historian Thomas Cochran suggests that “because philanthropic endeavor was above criticism as a path to social distinction, it held particular appeal for the newly rich.”<sup>35</sup> It would be a mistake, however, to assume that Mrs. Hearst used philanthropy as a means of social climbing, especially because she gave unostentatiously and at times anonymously. Also, as the wife of a former U.S. Senator, social position would have been hers without extensive charitable contributions. Indeed, her sincere personal involvement with the Berkeley students suggests that she was



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much more interested in the personal satisfaction of helping others than in the social rewards of educational giving. Her favorite expression regarding charitable work was always to “help the individual to help himself.”<sup>36</sup> Educational institutions proved a particularly firm foundation for individual self-improvement, and thus must have held special attraction for the generosity of Phoebe Hearst.

Whatever her specific motives, one cannot discount her genuine interest in using her husband’s mining fortune, which increased in value after his death, to upgrade the level of learning in California and the nation. According to her grandson, William Randolph Hearst, Jr., “to her money was fundamentally a means of doing good, and she used it to that purpose.”<sup>37</sup> In fact, fifteen years before her death, her continu-

ous charitable work had so exhausted her that she required a brief recuperative hospitalization.<sup>38</sup> Her efforts on behalf of the kindergarten movement in San Francisco and elsewhere helped to educate and acculturate the children of the immigrant poor and the working class, who often toiled long, poorly paid hours on farms or in factories before the passage of child labor laws. The University of California at Berkeley benefitted especially from her work in helping to transform a small, provincial campus into a nationally prominent center of higher education and research. At a time when women are only now beginning to find their rightful place in standard United States history textbooks, Phoebe Apperson Hearst justifiably stands out as an exceptional credit to her sex. □

See notes on page 314.

# FROM GOLDEN HORN TO GOLDEN GATE



Rear Admiral Ya. K. Stark.

*Stepan Savin in Cossack uniform, one of the relics of the past which the refugees displayed at later social events.*

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF A.I. SOFRONOFF

On July 2, 1923, the Army transport S.S. *Merritt* out of Manila docked at Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. It carried 526 Russian "boat people," survivors of some seven thousand who had fled Vladivostok eight months previously as victorious Communist forces advanced on the last outpost of resistance to the Bolshevik revolution. The refugees' asylum in the United States had been arranged by Leonard Wood, then Governor General of the Philippines. The last leg of the flight was the peaceful termination of a harrowing adventure.<sup>1</sup>

The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 took five years to conquer its internal and external foes. Remnants of the loyalist "white" forces were driven to the peripheries of the Russian land mass, including the far eastern provinces of Siberia where they established the Far Eastern Republic (FER) in May 1921. For the year-and-a-half that it survived, FER was a buffer state which was dependent for its existence upon Japanese forces, the last of the foreign interventionists (including Americans) who had occupied the area after

the first World War.<sup>2</sup>

On June 17, 1921, FER invited Admiral Ya. K. Stark (1878–1950), then a refugee in Harbin after long service in the Imperial Russian Navy, to take command of what was left of the Siberian Flotilla based in Vladivostok. Stark responded promptly and actively. He found that the flotilla consisted of twelve coast guard cutters, ice-breakers, and other minor ships, many needing repairs. On shore there were a naval hospital, a hydrographic station, a naval observatory, and a radio communications station. Administration was in disarray; several ships took their orders from a refugee headquarters in Paris. Armaments were under Japanese lock and key, although Stark succeeded in getting some small arms and artillery pieces released. Stark drew up a budget of 220,000 rubles for the rehabilitation of the flotilla and submitted it to FER. A sum of 32,382 rubles and 57 kopeks was allocated, prompting Stark to write, "Comment is unnecessary."<sup>3</sup> By this time, rubles were practically worthless anyway; the only stable currency was the Japanese yen.



# THE FLIGHT OF THE RUSSIAN SIBERIAN FLOTILLA

by Michael and Mary Shimkin

Despite these difficulties, Stark proceeded. He dismissed Communist sympathizers and organized the flotilla to begin operations. A transport was dispatched in July 1921 to Kamchatka to show the FER flag. Unfortunately, "such a flag . . . did not exist."<sup>4</sup> In November, the flotilla seized Olga, a small port north of Vladivostok, from the Communists with little resistance. Five ships sailed up the Suchan river to "cleanse the area of reds."<sup>5</sup> The flotilla also supported an unsuccessful and bloody white attempt to take Khabarovsk. Further operations were interrupted by winter conditions.

Even more important, the Japanese decided by the end of 1921 to accept what was now obviously the inevitable Communist victory; they wanted no more military diversions. The support of the indigenous population, firmly anticipated by the white generals, simply did not materialize. FER celebrated its first anniversary on May 26, 1922 with a parade and a performance at the Vladivostok theater. It was a dispirited show before an uncaring audience.<sup>6</sup> Stark, however, continued to

proclaim, "I and the Flotilla shall not enter on the path of revolution."<sup>7</sup>

But the end was approaching and in October 1922 the flotilla began to prepare for the evacuation of some ten thousand military and civilian white Russians from Vladivostok. Nine coast guard cutters and fourteen transports assembled at Zolotoi Rog (Golden Horn), the city harbor. Four thousand tons of coal were loaded. Flour and corned beef were distributed among the ships, and seven thousand yen were scraped together for expenses. Stark denied rumors that he had acquired half a million yen from the Bank of Vladivostok.<sup>8</sup> Subsequent events showed that indeed there was no central fund; money ran out, and Stark had to sell the less serviceable ships from his motley collection.

As the Japanese prepared to sail away and Communist forces approached Vladivostok in late October, Stark ordered a few disabled torpedo boats and one destroyer to be sent to the bottom to prevent them from falling to the Communists. The Japanese, however, ordered the ice-breakers to remain to keep the port of Vladivostok usable



Prince A. Chagadaeff, ensign, who emigrated to Brazil.

Alexander I. Sofronoff (left) and Stepan Savin.

Coast Guard Cutter  
Strazha.



during the winter. Japanese authorities released no more arms to the flotilla, but a Japanese cruiser watched over the Russian evacuation from a distance. The last ship, the cutter *Strazha* (Guardian) left under fire from Bolshevik forces. The seventy-foot vessel carried a crew of eighteen officers and enlisted men. One of them was Alexander Sofronoff, a sixteen-year-old from Khabarovsk who had joined the Siberian navy six months before "to see the world" and had just completed training as a machinist's mate.<sup>9</sup>

The flotilla headed for Poset, a harbor across the bay and south of Vladivostok for its last staging on Russian soil. Die-hards among the fleeing military, such as the far eastern Cossack group under General Glebov, left for Manchuria to join anti-Communist groups there and continue their resistance. Some of the civilian officials of FER and the city of Vladivostok, including the

last white mayor of the city and his guard, also joined the contingents headed for Manchuria. About seven thousand refugees remained with the flotilla, including wounded soldiers, women, and children. Electing not to proceed into Manchuria and afraid of falling into Communist hands at Poset, they sailed for Wonsan, Korea, 360 miles south of Vladivostok.

Their plans for the future were fuzzy indeed. Japanese ports were closed to them. Nor did they have permission to land in Korea, then a possession of Japan. Communications from the Imperial Russian naval attaché's office in Tokyo informed them that neither Japan nor China would admit Russian refugees. The advice from Tokyo was to accept the fact that the white cause was finished and to sail for Shanghai or Manila, although the ships of the flotilla were not fit for a voyage on the open sea. The only cheerful note was word from the American Embassy in Tokyo that the refugees could anticipate humane treatment in the Philippines.<sup>10</sup>

Still under observation by the Japanese cruiser, the flotilla arrived in Wonsan on the last day of October. Radio messages from the Communists followed it, urging the flotilla to return to Vladivostok under full amnesty.<sup>11</sup> Three ships from Kamchatka and other ports of evacuation joined the flotilla at Wonsan only to find that Wonsan authorities had forbidden anyone to disembark. Confined aboard ships with

dwindling supplies of coal and food, the seven thousand refugees were forced to cut their heat and warm meals to a minimum. The condition of the wounded and children among them deteriorated rapidly. How many died is not recorded.

After several days of discussions and appeals, the Japanese from the escorting cruiser constructed a sickbay on shore for the wounded. Civilians were allowed to land and occupy old barracks where "their situation was but little better than aboard ship."<sup>12</sup> All supplies had to be purchased with cash. Those who could afford it left for destinations in China and elsewhere; their number and fate remain unknown.

The flotilla, now reduced to sixteen ships and five thousand refugees, was reorganized into four groups which departed Wonsan on November 23 and arrived in Pusan three days later. Events in Pusan were a repetition of what had occurred in Wonsan. Passengers were allowed to land only for short periods. City authorities and merchants cheated and overcharged them for everything. Worst of all, the coal sold to them was of poor quality.<sup>13</sup>

Another offer to return to the Soviet Union under full amnesty arrived, this one personally delivered to Stark by a naval lieutenant who had served with Stark on the *Aurora*, the battleship that fired the first shots of the Bolshevik revolution. Stark did not deign to reply.<sup>14</sup> No further instructions or suggestions came from Tokyo. Korea and Japan

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Nikolaie Merkulov (center), the last "white" mayor of Vladivostok, with his son and his official guard. The banner reads, "To the rebirth of Russia."

were forbidden, and the flotilla was unwelcome in China. The international port of Shanghai was the only one remaining open to the refugees.

The ships left Pusan on December 2 and headed for Shanghai. Two days later they were hit by a typhoon on the Yellow Sea. Radio communications broke down, and the ships lost contact with each other. Many were damaged and started to draw water. The 650-ton cutter *Lieutenant Didimov* sank with all hundred hands and passengers. The *Strazha* and others were blown off course and had to seek shelter in Nagasaki, Japan, where the mayor supplied them with enough coal to reach Shanghai and allowed some minor repairs. Stark sent instructions by radio to hug the coast line of Korea, but the captain of the *Strazha* decided to cross the Yellow Sea more directly. Another storm hit, and the crew was incapacitated by seasickness, with the captain remaining on his back most of the way. The second officer stood watch for three days.<sup>15</sup> Despite the strenuous conditions encountered by small ships which were only marginally seaworthy, fifteen of the sixteen ships that had left Pusan straggled into the harbor at Shanghai by December 6. Five were severely damaged. Four were patched up, but the *Strazha* was sold to the Chinese and the money used to purchase supplies for the rest of the flotilla.<sup>16</sup>

The passengers begged to be spared further tortures on the seas. At least one committed suicide.

Stark conferred again and again with local authorities, demanding assistance and even threatening to use force to get it.<sup>17</sup> The Soviet chargé d'affaires recommended that they return to Russia and was almost thrown overboard for his advice.<sup>18</sup> When official word came in Shanghai that the refugees would be accepted in Manila, Stark sold two or three more ships and some arms to buy coal and food. As in Korea, the coal delivered to them consisted of coal dust, although further haggling produced a more usable product.

Despite the promise of a haven, the majority of the refugees remained in Shanghai and made their own individual plans. Stark's report stops at this point, concluding that "there awaited us ever more wretched ordeals."<sup>19</sup> With fewer than a thousand refugees on a dozen ships, the flotilla left Shanghai in February 1923, now under the watchful eye of a United States cruiser. A Communist ship had been sighted in the area. A typhoon hit the ships in the Formosa Strait. The *Ajax* with two or three hundred passengers and cadets foundered and sank, leaving fewer than ten survivors to be picked up by other ships of the flotilla.<sup>20</sup>

Eleven ships carrying eight hundred persons straggled into Manila Bay during February. Food and shelter were provided for the refugees

at the American naval base at Olongapo near Manila, causing the refugees to lionize General Leonard Wood, the U.S. Governor-General of the Philippines, for his concern and help.<sup>21</sup> While the refugees lived in barracks at Olongapo, arrangements for their final disposition moved through the channels of the U.S. government. The Russian immigration quota for the fiscal year 1922-23 which ended on June 30 had been exhausted, but admission to the United States after July 1 was possible.<sup>22</sup> In the meanwhile, about a hundred individuals found jobs in Manila and decided to remain there, while others opted to go to Australia and other Pacific nations. One motivation, especially among officers, was to stay closer to Russia so they could return quickly if the anti-Communist counter-revolution they still anticipated should occur.<sup>23</sup>

Once more, ships were sold, this time despite objections from the Soviet government that the ships were its property.<sup>24</sup> A 1927 report, however, indicated that one of the ships, the *Baikal*, was still in Manila Bay commanded by a commodore of the flotilla, perhaps the last of the Czar's navy.<sup>25</sup> Two of Stark's officers stated that the money realized from the sale of the ships was distributed for the care and support of the refugees, but we have not been able to locate an accounting of how the funds were spent.<sup>26</sup>

General Wood arranged free transportation to the United States for the refugees on the army trans-

An unidentified ship from the flotilla in heavy seas.



port S.S. *Merritt*. On May 26, Admiral Stark made a farewell speech to the refugees who had elected to go to the United States. "The generous American government has enabled you to seek home and fortune in that great country," he said and admonished his former charges to help with the work on shipboard, to set examples of good behavior, to hand over all firearms, and to consume no alcohol.<sup>27</sup> Admiral Stark remained in Manila, subsequently emigrating to France to join the Russian emigres in Paris. Other survivors of the flotilla reported that he kept no money from the sale of its ships and that he worked as a chauffeur and taxi driver. During the Nazi occupation of France, he became head of the Russian Naval Officers Organization, remaining an implacable foe of communism. He died in poverty in 1950.<sup>28</sup>

The S.S. *Merritt* lifted anchor in Manila on May 26, 1923. The passenger list included 35 American military personnel and 527 Russians who traveled in third class. The senior Russian officer was sixty-two-year-old Lieutenant General T. Kheishanon, who was accompanied by his wife and son. On the list were Russian naval and army officers, engineers, two doctors, and a chaplain. There were over fifty families, many of them with children. Forty-three of the children were under fifteen years of age; two had been born in the Philippines. One infant girl died during the voyage and was buried at sea. The great majority of the Rus-

sian passengers were young farmers and sailors. Among them were nineteen-year-old Sofronoff and his twenty-three-year-old buddy Stephan Savin. Also listed as a seaman was nineteen-year-old Prince Chagdaeff.<sup>29</sup>

The *Merritt* turned back to Manila on May 29 amidst rumors that the Russian stokers were about to strike as a result of instigation by a Bolshevik agitator. The rumor proved false, but the ship acquired additional Philippine stokers to maintain adequate steam pressure in the engines.<sup>30</sup> The voyage resumed on May 30 and continued to San Francisco without further incidents, arriving on June 30 but waiting until the new fiscal year began before docking. On July 2, 1923, 526 Russian refugees disembarked at Angel Island. They represented less than ten percent of the white Russians who had fled from the Communists in Vladivostok eight months before. Immigration authorities found nineteen individuals ineligible for admission to the United States, and they left for Canada, Mexico, and other countries.<sup>31</sup>

The American Red Cross and the Russian Refugee Relief Society of America offered help, and business leaders provided some employment opportunities. The Labor Board of San Francisco and various union leaders protested the admission of the refugees, however, as several strikes were in progress.<sup>32</sup> Sofronoff and ten other sailors started work as window washers at the Southern

Pacific Railroad yards in Oakland within a week after their arrival. They worked eight hours a day, six days a week for thirty-seven cents an hour. They were lodged in a boarding house operated by a Russian woman and supervised by a Russian-speaking student from the University of California at Berkeley. They were not informed that they were strike breakers.<sup>33</sup>

Within six months, they acquired sufficient knowledge of the English language to find other occupations in the area. Sofronoff went to work for the Langendorf Bakery in San Francisco at seventy-five cents an hour.

The five hundred Russians of the Stark Siberian Flotilla were one of the larger groups of Russian refugees from the communist revolution to reach the United States. They soon assimilated into the American population but retained their white Russian ethnic identification. Many settled in the Western Addition and the Richmond districts of San Francisco, and almost all became citizens of their adopted country. Many continued to participate in the activities of the Russian churches and clubs of the area, however, recalling their adventures at annual Russian balls where they displayed the few surviving fineries and decorations from their days under the Czar.<sup>34</sup> □

*We are indebted to A. I. Sofronoff, V. S. Charnetsky, Anne Bashkiroff, and Michael W. Tripp for valuable materials and leads.*

*See notes on page 315.*



*Edited by James J. Rawls*

## THE RONALD REAGAN LIBRARY AT STANFORD

*By William R. Kimball*

With the satisfactory completion of negotiations and the selection of a site in February 1985, it seems virtually certain that the presidential papers of Ronald Reagan will find their permanent home on the Stanford campus. It was my privilege to serve as president of the Stanford University Board of Trustees from the time the idea of their coming to Stanford was first broached to the selection and approval of a library site, and I have thus had ample opportunity to hear from others their views on the importance of this collection, as well as to form some myself.

Stanford has always seemed to me the logical place for the Reagan presidential papers. The president is, after all, a Californian, and Stanford is an eminent California institution. Moreover, his gubernatorial and presidential campaign papers are already at Stanford, in the Hoover Institution, and for a whole variety of reasons it makes eminent sense that the Reagan papers from each period should be kept in close proximity, thus eventually affording scholars the opportunity to study the full range of his public career, going back to his election as governor of California in 1966. Finally, the President has close ties with the Hoover Institution. He has been an honorary fellow there since 1977, knows and admires Dr. Glenn Campbell, the current director, and has drawn on the resources of the Hoover to fill many of the key posts in his administration.

The Reagan gubernatorial papers housed in the Hoover Institution total some three thousand linear feet, and consist of two segments: the public record, including speeches, press releases, transcripts, and the like, which is now open and has been widely used by researchers in the last four years; and a section, now closed, consisting of internal files, memoranda and correspondence. While this section remains closed at the discretion of a group of trustees named by Mr. Reagan, and of Mr. Reagan himself, access to specific parts

of it can be gained by scholars with permission of the trustees. The campaign papers, about five hundred linear feet, also at Hoover, contain polling data, position papers, strategy memoranda, correspondence, speeches, and tapes. This collection is currently closed and is likely to remain so for some years.

Although the presidential papers will not be physically in the Hoover Institution, they will be housed in a library nearby, and there is every expectation of close working relationships. The Reagan Library will be operated as an independent entity by the National Archives and Records Administration, an agency of the U.S. Government. The building which will house it will be paid for through gifts raised by the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation, a non-profit organization incorporated in California earlier this year.

The presidential papers are now all in Washington but will be shipped to California at the conclusion of Mr. Reagan's term. They are expected to be about forty thousand linear feet, which, for purposes of comparison, is four times the size of the University's own Special Collections and Archives. Another twenty thousand linear feet will come in the form of papers from the Executive Office of the President, still more if, as is likely, some of those who served as cabinet officers under Mr. Reagan elect to make this library the repository of their papers. Access will be governed by a 1978 statute under which the president retains discretion over the use of his papers for twelve years, after which access and use is determined by the Freedom of Information Act.

Stanford regards the outcome of the Reagan Library negotiations to be a happy one. While there were difficult issues at each step of the way since 1981 when the proposal was first surfaced, these have been resolved, one by one, by thorough discussion among the parties involved and with the full input of the Stanford faculty. The result of this

process—which to some appeared excessively time consuming, but which was essential in the environment of a major research university where the intellectual community participates in all major academic decisions—has been a concept that most agree will represent a valued addition to the university in keeping with its commitment to scholarship and faithful to its values.

The issues raised before the final outcome have been widely and fully publicized. Nothing is to be gained by reviewing them here. Suffice it to say that the initial proposal for a museum, public affairs center, and library as one complex was significantly modified as discussion proceeded. Early in these discussions it appeared that Eureka College in Illinois, which the president attended as an undergraduate, would be a fitting and appropriate place for the museum. Requirements that the public affairs center would be subject to normal academic governance if it were to come to Stanford resulted in the decision that it would not be a part of the "package." Such a center may well come into being, but it will not be a part of the university, nor located on Stanford lands. That left us with what the faculty, the officers of the university and the trustees regarded as the most important element: the library, with its immense potential to contribute to scholarship, understanding and analysis of the Reagan administration.

No serious historian would venture an opinion concerning the importance of such a resource before having access to it, and probably not before the lapse of quite a lot of time. Not being a professional historian myself, I would be inclined to even greater caution. It will be many years before we begin the process of placing Ronald Reagan, the man, his political career, and his presidency into perspective. How his accomplishments will rank in the evaluation of history will be for future generations to decide. There are, however, a few points about Ronald Reagan that give us some hints

of the potential importance of these collections.

Mr. Reagan is expected to complete two terms as president. If he does, he will be the first since Eisenhower to do so. That will have afforded him more time than any other president in the last thirty years to achieve his program. His values are very different from those of any president since Herbert Hoover, and in putting them into effect he has challenged and discarded what many believed to be fundamental roles and responsibilities of government. Although the theoretical basis of his political philosophy has not yet been impressively articulated, his actions bespeak adherence to a core of classic conservative principles.

He is also popular, and has remained so while seeing the country through a difficult recession, facing crippling deficits, undertaking a program of rearmament for which there seems to be little general enthusiasm, and asking people to do with less of the government services once considered essential to winning votes. Mr. Reagan's style of administration is distinctive. He is a delegator, comfortable in relying on others, skillful at placing his subordinates in positions that will exact their best work while exposing them to collegial scrutiny and challenge. He has taken the concept of checks and balances and installed it in a wholly informal way in the White House over which he presides.

Perhaps one other substantive feature of the Reagan administration will be of special interest for the future: its involvement in Central America, where the complex and difficult issues that surround U.S. relations with those countries have long been overshadowed by events elsewhere. The Reagan administration has focused intensive attention on Central America. Never again, I suspect, will these countries slip back into obscurity. Mr. Reagan has, for better or worse, elevated them to world prominence and brought about a whole new set of relationships which will be impor-



CHS LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO

*Ronald Reagan as governor of California signing legislation. Standing is Assemblyman George Milias (R-Gilroy).*

tant to this country for the foreseeable future.

Finally, while it could be said that Richard Nixon is remembered, rather unfortunately, as an audio president, Ronald Reagan is the first genuinely audiovisual president. His background in film and television made this natural. What made it practical was the development of low-heat lighting that became widely used at about the time he was first elected and made possible the videotaping, without the glare of conventional studio lighting, of an immense number of cabinet meetings, ceremonies, and even individual meetings with associates, legislators and foreign dignitaries. These videotapes will provide historians with a wealth of materials in a new dimension. It is a virtual certainty that one of the salient design features in

the new Ronald Reagan Presidential Library will be screening rooms where individuals and groups can witness videotapes of some of the key events of the Reagan administration.

At this writing, the basic agreements between Stanford and the White House are in place. A site which was the first choice of all parties has been selected. The organizational framework in the form of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation exists for fundraising. But there remain three years of this administration to complete. While no one can predict what they will hold, one can be reasonably certain that they will be eventful. That unknown, speculative element of what is yet to come adds to the excitement of the prospect of the Ronald Reagan Library at Stanford. □



# *International Port of Call: An Illustrated Maritime History of the Golden Gate.*

By Robert J. Schwendinger, assisted by J.J. Lamb. (Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1984. 175 pp., \$22.95.)

*Reviewed by Lawrence Kinnaird, Professor of History Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley, and author, among other books and articles, of History of the Greater San Francisco Bay Region, 2 vols.*

Robert J. Schwendinger has written a concise but highly embellished history of maritime activities on San Francisco Bay from the days when Indians navigated it in tule rush canoes to recent times with ships arriving from many parts of the world. Related to the development of international trade were the characteristics of San Francisco's population. Immigrants from many countries, Oriental as well as Occidental, gave to the Bay Area a cosmopolitan quality not found elsewhere in the American West.

Well-known facts of San Francisco Bay history are narrated with clarity and style. The book's larger portion deals with the early period that reached its climax with the Gold Rush which filled the Bay with ships and caused the city of San Francisco to rise as if by magic. Final sections cover the development of international trade, "California's bridge to the world," as the author describes it, and the Bay as a modern port. Treatment is broad and topics are introduced which range far beyond the Golden Gate.

Approximately one-third of the book was written by J.J. Lamb and entitled *Partners in Progress*. It consists of thirty-two brief historical sketches of San Francisco Bay organizations and companies based on maritime commerce. Under the title of "patrons" they have contributed to the publication of the book, yet the

sketches are too tastefully done to give the appearance of a business "mug book."

The most striking characteristic of the book is its format, in which illustrations dominate the text. Sixteen pages are devoted entirely to illustrations in color. More than one hundred pictures of ships and other water borne craft are shown. Detailed descriptions of illustrations are printed in the very wide margins and are noteworthy because they contain much history not included in the main text.

In contrast to the book's title, the Golden Gate and its shores play a very inconspicuous part in the narrative. Fort Point is mentioned, but information concerning fortifications on the north side of the Golden Gate is absent. Although the modern Presidio is a great military base, it is not described. The Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the Golden Gate bridge are represented by illustrations, yet their histories are not included. The work has obviously been limited to purely commercial maritime activities. Consequently, despite the maritime connection, no space has been given to the Navy's San Francisco Bay establishments.

The author has devised a rather unusual plan for his book and has adhered to it successfully. He has produced a useful, specialized history based on a first class job of collecting materials, designing, and presentation. The book is interesting to look at and a pleasure to read. □

# *The University of California/Sotheby Book of California Wine.*

By Doris Muscatine, Maynard A. Amerine & Bob Thompson (eds.), (Berkeley & London: University of California Press/Sotheby Publications, 1984, xxviii, 616 pp., \$65.00).

*Reviewed by Charles T. Morrissey,*

*University of Vermont, and author of "Oral History and the California Wine Industry: An Essay Review," published in Agricultural History, July, 1977, and reprinted in Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology, edited by David Dunaway and Willa K. Baum (American Association for State and Local History, 1984).*

Big books tend to be ponderous, and although this hefty volume is weighty in both size and contents (even the title is a mouthful), it is in fact a sparkling concoction, delightful to consume. Informative and entertaining, beautiful in design and typography, it demonstrates triumphantly that book-making and wine-making are allied arts, deserving each other. For the UC Press and Sotheby's to collaborate so successfully in parenting this offspring shows that they, too, deserve each other.

Forty-four essayists contribute forty-nine selections, varying from the history of California wines to related subjects—climate, terrain, genetic engineering, enological and technological developments, legal and political complexities, the economic aspects of wine sales. Other chapters explore sensory evaluations, labels (and how to interpret them), bottles, barrels, corks, corkscrews, medical and therapeutic uses of "man's oldest and safest tranquilizer," wine criticism, and even advice on how to amaze dinner companions by identifying wines via "blind" taste tests. Add summaries of wine literature, a primer and glossary, and eleven "reflections" on particular varieties, from altar wines to zinfandel, and the girth of this collection becomes strikingly evident. This is a well-stocked book for connoisseurs of California wines who want well-stocked cellars.

Neither chauvinism nor snobbery mars these pages. Ernest and Julio Gallo earn praise for producing "very drinkable white wines at a lower price than any advanced country can match," and despite the impressive progress achieved by California vintners there is

Roy Brady on page 460 declaring, "California wine is still half-tamed, wild, runaway stuff." Nor does mythology distort these portrayals. The first California wine is attributed to Father Pablo deMugartegui and Father Gregorio Amurrio of the mission at San Juan Capistrano in 1782, thus displacing Father Junipero Serra from the pioneer role he occupies in popular lore. Brady is frank again in dealing with the Serra legend: "It's a pretty story, the beloved father carefully tending the vine cuttings through the arduous trek up Baja California and putting them gently in the earth of San Diego with his own hands. The story was pretty enough to cause the California wine industry, or some of its less scholarly sectors at any rate, to observe the bicentennial of California wine prematurely in 1969."

Most appealing about this wide-ranging assortment is the convivial tone of its separate selections. Historians might echo this reviewer's lament that despite the size and comprehensiveness of this project more excursions into the history of California wines didn't merit greater attention, but that regret is at least partly the consequence of personal taste. All things considered—and this compilation does consider all things pertaining to California wines—this remarkable achievement bubbles enticingly; the span is encompassing, the verdicts are equitable as well as sprightly. Doris Muscatine contributes one selection simply titled "Extravaganzas," but the whole volume can be termed an extravaganza. □

## *The Golden Gate and the Silver Screen: San Francisco in the History of the Cinema.*

By Geoffrey Bell. (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984, 186 pp. \$24.50 cloth.)

Reviewed by Ernest Callenbach, Editor, Film Quarterly.



Beatriz Michelena was the leading star of the Bay Area California Motion Picture Corporation, which eventually folded because of its inadequate distribution system.

In recent years film historians have been exploring early production in New Jersey (where "Westerns" were first shot) and in Florida. Now Geoffrey Bell has added to this regional history with his readable account of film-making in the San Francisco Bay Area.

It's possible that, had certain things gone differently, the Bay Area might have become the national center of production. As it turned out, Northern California can claim to have been the birthplace of moving pictures, but the child grew up elsewhere. Bell provides a full account of Eadweard Muybridge's work with Leland Stanford that first captured living motion on a photographic base and then devised a way to project cycles of it before an audience. Bell is an ardent researcher but not always a precise writer, and historians who quarrel over priorities will not like his saying

that the first Muybridge experiments demonstrated "reproducing" of motion; that had to wait until the first projection, which took place in San Francisco on May 4, 1880. (It would also have been more exact of Bell not to write that at that session "across the illumined screen again and again galloped a delicate-limbed mare"; what viewers actually saw seems to have been a projection of a constantly recurring set of frames photographed with a battery of cameras, so the horse must have seemed to remain in the middle of the picture.)

What Muybridge began was soon carried on to commercially workable devices by W. K. L. Dickson at Edison's laboratory and by parallel workers in Europe; the first projection of what we now consider motion-picture photography took place in Paris. When the industry had spread pretty much through-



out the known world, American production began to move outside the New York area (and Chicago, a secondary center) and one of the places it popped up was the Bay Area. Bell gives a very intriguing account of the extensive production done in Niles by W. A. "Broncho Billy" Anderson, who produced, directed, wrote and acted in several hundred short films made there. (Many tantalizing stills show backgrounds which might conceivably still be matched up with their locations.) Anderson's company lured Charlie Chaplin away from Mack Sennett's Hollywood comedy factory and some of his early films were made in Niles: *A Night Out*, with Ben Turpin, and more notably *The Tramp*. Bell includes an undocumented story that the tramp figure came from a chance meeting Chaplin had with a real tramp in San Francisco; from the work of other historians (though not necessarily from Chaplin's own highly inaccurate autobiography) it seems the story was rather more complicated. In any case, the cinema's greatest artist did work in Niles for a while; then, finding it too rustic, he returned to Hollywood. He took with him, however, a San Francisco cabaret performer named Edna Purviance who became the intelligent, resourceful and charming figure we know from the later films.

Broncho Billy was done in by his partner in S&A, and by the growing competition from W. S. Hart and Tom Mix. But serious attempts at film production resumed later with the California Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC). Bell's devoted research has turned up this hitherto forgotten chapter of film history: locally controlled, financed, and inspired, the CMPC films took advantage of San Francisco's rich theater life and also drew inspiration from a "local" writer—Bret Harte. Its star and chief sustenance was a "raven-haired enchantress" (to quote Bell) named Beatriz Michelena, whom some saw as a rival to Bernhardt. Certainly, from the illustrations, she had great eyes that must

have photographed smashing.

The CMPC went down because it was never able to secure reliable national distribution; then as now, distribution is all. But other small firms continued to make occasional films, and the Bay Area was used as a location for Hollywood productions from the thirties onward.

Bell includes a chapter on post-1945 production, but it is relatively spotty. He gives a full account of the "Art in Cinema" showings of films made by experimental film-makers including Frank Stauffacher, James Broughton, Sidney Peterson, et al.; he gives a full appreciation of the extraordinary work of Jordan Belson. But his report on production in recent years is lamentably incomplete. He merely mentions Phil Kaufman and Michad Ritchie; he gives a somewhat extended but still very incomplete account of the work of John Korty (who was the first major director to locate in the Bay Area—setting up a studio for documentaries and animation in Stinson Beach). And then, for mysterious reasons that cannot be historical, he omits the crucial role of Francis Coppola in establishing Zoetrope and making full-scale production (and especially post-production) possible in the Bay Area. Bell gives a great deal of admiring attention to George Lucas instead—never mentioning that he began as Coppola's protégé. He also omits mention of the second wave of experimental film-making centered around Canyon Cinema in the sixties, and there is no mention of the powerful documentaries that have come out of the Bay Area in recent years. With its appendices and bibliography the book would have constituted a respectable contribution without this unsatisfactory last chapter.

### *Ambrose Bierce: The Making of a Misanthrope.*

By Richard Saunders. (The Literary West Series. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1985, 110 pp. \$7.95 paper).



Ambrose Bierce.  
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Reviewed by Richard W. Etulain, Professor of History at the University of New Mexico, and author of Conversations with Wallace Stegner on Western History and Literature, *Western Films: A Brief History, and Faith and Imagination: Essays on Evangelicals in Literature*.

Too often, writes Richard Saunders, literary critics and biographers overplay the enigmatic death of Ambrose Bierce and overlook his superior talents as a satiric journalist and short story writer. In the less than ninety pages of text in this book, the author tries to avoid these earlier emphases and reviews Bierce's life as a writer and public figure in California from the 1860s until 1912. Dividing his abbreviated narrative into eight chapters, Saunders surveys the peaks and valleys of Bierce's controversial career. The text is based primarily on well-known biographies of Bierce and a handful of other published sources on California and American cultural his-

tory. Scattered throughout the text are numerous, apt photographs.

The strongest sections of this volume are the sporadic, revealing vignettes the author provides of Bierce's life. One learns of his infidelity to a faithful wife who loved him despite his moody disregard of her and their three children. Equally revealing are the descriptions of Bierce's stormy, love/hate years working for William Randolph Hearst's publications as well as Bierce's willingness to help aspiring writers—as long as they treated him like the literary lion he wanted to be.

Less helpful are Saunders' readings of Bierce's writings; he seems uninterested in providing much penetrating analysis of Bierce's fiction. In addition, Saunders sometimes overstates his case. Bierce was hardly the dean of western literature—as more reliance on the superb literary histories of Franklin Walker and Kevin Starr would show—and he did not "single-handedly" defeat Collis P. Huntington's Funding Bill. Nor is the author correct in asserting that this defeat "ultimately changed the course of history" (p. 72, 73). Moreover, Bierce was not more knowledgeable about frontier violence than was Mark Twain. This reviewer also doubts that Bierce's satire "greatly influenced a host of modern writers" (p. 102).

Still, this book is well written and a handy introduction to the California years of Bierce. Moreover, the author's biographical portrait of his subject is generally clear and persuasive. One is convinced that Bierce was an unfaithful husband, an inadequate father, and often a gloomy and unpredictable companion. At the same time he was a male chauvinist of the first order and a man of giant ego. But he was also a witty and sometimes entertaining fellow, a deft journalist, and a precise student of language. Overall, however, he was a person of dark moods who despised religion and ministers, harpooned love and marriage, and sliced up Victorian morality. Indeed, as Saunders notes, Bierce "hated everyone equally" (p. 40).

While the author's analyses of Bierce's writings are not particularly illuminating, in depicting Bierce's failures at establishing and retaining close, long-lasting friendships, Saunders achieves his major purpose of analyzing and interpreting his subject's misanthropy. General students and most scholars will find this book entertaining and rewarding. □

## *A Cast of Hawks, A Rowdy Tale of Greed, Scandal, and Corruption in the Early Days of San Francisco.*

By Milton S. Gould. (Santa Barbara: Copley Books, A Division of The Copley Press, Inc., 1985, 374 pp., \$24.50.)

Reviewed by Joseph H. Engbeck, Jr., director of publications for the California Department of Parks and Recreation and author of *State Parks of California, From 1864 to the Present*.

A precedent-setting supreme court case, *In Re Neagle*, is the organizing principle used by the author to bind together this story of five nineteenth century Californians: David S. Terry, David C. Broderick, Stephen J. Field, William Sharon, and Sarah Althea Hill. Of course, the story has been told before—many times in many ways by journalists, biographers, and historians. But Mr. Gould is in a wonderful position to tell it once again and make it new. As senior attorney with Shea and Gould, one of New York's largest and most politically powerful law firms, Gould brings to his narrative the perspective of a practicing attorney fully accustomed to operating on the twentieth century equivalent of the level on which the story originally occurred one hundred years ago.

The result is good, readable narrative history with all the blood and thunder left in it, told as only a wise and worldly man of action could tell it. The five main

characters seem larger than life at times, and the overall story continually verges on melodrama, but that is precisely the author's point. This story is unique to California—it could have happened only during that period of incredibly rapid transition, growth, and development that began with the California Gold Rush.

In the preface, Gould himself explains that he has been fascinated by the interwoven destinies of his five main characters ever since he first read about them as a young law student nearly fifty years ago. Reading the book today, it is easy to imagine the years of recreational but extensive reading and other research that went into this project. The presentation of documentary illustrations alone is masterful, and the chapter-opening quotations are delightful.

One glaring omission must be noted: the portrait of Broderick is faulty in several important respects, and the "Bibliographical Sketch" makes no reference to the one really good biography that is available: *David C. Broderick, A Political Portrait* by David A. Williams. In a book as readable and otherwise reliable as *Cast of Hawks* this oversight seems especially regrettable.

Gould's story would only have been strengthened by a more accurate portrait of Broderick. And a full appreciation of Broderick's political position would only have made Gould's portrayal of California during the last half of the nineteenth century into a still more haunting comment on human nature.

But this is only to say that this very fine book could have been just a little bit better. It is a valuable addition to our literature, and we are lucky to have it just the way it is. □

## *Vigilantes in Gold Rush San Francisco*

By Robert M. Senkewicz, S.J. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985, 272 pp., \$24.95, cloth.)



Reviewed by W.H. Hutchinson, Professor of History Emeritus, California State University, Chico.

This latest in a very long line of accounts pertaining to the largest vigilante action in the nation's history is distinguished by the disciplined methodology common to the author's religious order. It boasts a most useful essay on the historiography of the Committee of Vigilance of 1856; has some illustrations that are very old hat, as it were; reads well and has a pungent thesis that is apt to raise a few hackles.

Greedy merchants, who in 1856 were financial failures, plus intolerant Protestants, are Senkewicz's roots of the 1856 uprising, with James King of William, who is dealt with rather harshly, albeit he *was* a flamboyant moralist, providing the emotional voltage. The purpose of these mercantile failures, "hustlers" in the author's terminology, in promoting the 1856 vigilante movement was to secure control of San Francisco politics. This thesis is made abundantly and redundantly clear, summed up in the writer's own words, "San Francisco may well be the only city in the United States whose early history was written by the losers," meaning the members of the Committee of 1856. Senkewicz supports his thesis as only a disciplined intelligence can do, but this does not, in one man's opinion, make it necessary to swallow that whole, like a raw oyster.

It could be suggested that there was not so much anti-Catholic sentiment behind the 1856 movement as there was anti-Irish animosity. The Irish controlled the city's politics and San Francisco may well have been the first major United States city in which the Irish had such power. If this be anywhere near the truth, then David Broderick's influence and personal enrichment are not adequately dealt with.

Senkewicz's statement that "Riots moved west when the country did," implies that riots were peculiar to the United States and not to human nature.



This also overlooks the fact that there were more deaths a thousandfold in New York and Philadelphia riots long after the Gold Rush than ever can be charged or credited to the vigilante movements in San Francisco.

The author seems to feel that the frontier was hacked into forts and towns and cities before it was or could be transformed into a network of family farms. This flies in the face of a body of frontier historiography that posits the exact opposite pattern of development on the frontier. The authorial view is an urban view, that frontier America was then, as the nation is today, urban dominated. The grid pattern of cities, which Senkewicz attributes to the Gods of Commerce, may well have come from the grid pattern of the public land surveys. Or it may have come from the invention of mathematics and its infliction upon the human mind of the symmetry and beauty of right angles.

San Francisco was not unique among urban centers, then or now, in its alleged crimes and criminals and corrupt politicians. Neither were its merchants any different from those in other urban centers in placing their unease about life, limb and property on *Ausländers*, be such Baptists, French Canadians, Austrians, Chinese, or whoever was handy and different.

*Demonstration by the Committee of Vigilance of San Francisco on August 18, 1856.*

Contrary to the author's account, "swollen" streams and rivers were NOT conducive to placer mining; neither were dry streams or too low water. The state's climate dictated the seasonal pattern of placering and he has this pattern on aright. Whether he is correct or not in his statement that American cities "... exist as the arenas for the fulfillment of private greed," this is the basic tenet of his whole work. It is a condemnation of the unholy materialism of Gold Rush San Francisco and, by extension, the entire nation, a materialism far removed from the common weal envisioned by the Founding Fathers. This denies the obligation of the historian, which is not to try his case by a code unknown to the defendant. □

### *Ganbatte: Sixty-Year Struggle of a Kibei Worker.*

By Karl G. Yoneda. (Los Angeles: Asian American Studies Center, University of California, 1983, xvii, 244 pp., \$8.95 paper.)

Reviewed by Harvey Schwartz, Coordinator, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union—Univer-

sity of California, Berkeley, Oral History Project, author of *The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division, 1934–1938* (1978), and lecturer in the Labor Studies Program, San Francisco State University.

Reading as much like an adventure novel as a history book, this memoir recounts the lives of two well-known California radicals, Karl and Elaine Black Yoneda. Karl Yoneda, the son of Japanese farm workers, was born in the United States in 1906 and educated in Japan; he returned to this country in 1926 to avoid being drafted into the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces. Elaine Black, a New York-born daughter of Russian revolutionaries has been his wife and political comrade from the 1930s to the present.

*Ganbatte: Sixty-Year Struggle of a Kibei Worker* is a valuable and unique contribution to the history of California, where the Yonedas have spent most of their lives. Karl Yoneda's personal story exemplifies the experience of Japanese agricultural workers who immigrated to this state between 1880 and 1930—a topic that has not been extensively examined in the literature in English. Perhaps more important, the memoir documents and personalizes the significant but often overlooked history of Japanese-American labor activism and left-wing political militancy in California from the 1920s to the 1940s.

Karl Yoneda, a lifelong rebel and battler for social justice, joined the American Communist Party in 1927, worked at menial jobs while serving the party's Japanese section as a union organizer and newspaper editor through the mid-1930s, and became a CIO cannery union leader during the latter years of the depression. Blending historic events and personal experiences, he vividly recreates the depression era. For example, the author recounts being beaten in 1931, along with other peaceful Japanese demonstrators, by the Los Angeles Police Department's infamous "Red Squad"; and



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he describes his deliverance when Elaine Black and another representative of the party's International Labor Defense (ILD) posted bail to release him from jail, where his serious injuries had received only perfunctory treatment.

Yoneda traces his and his wife's activist careers against the background of the dramatic strikes, demonstrations, and political developments of the 1930s. He describes, for example, the long hours during the great 1934 maritime strike, when Elaine Black Yoneda, then serving in San Francisco as the ILD's district secretary, was arrested repeatedly while trying to bail out strikers. The year 1939 is well remembered by the Yoneda family for labor's campaign to free Tom Mooney and also for the birth of the Yonedas' son—named Tom Culbert for the just-pardoned labor leader and the newly-elected governor, Culbert Olson, who released Mooney after twenty-three years in prison on false charges.

*Elaine Black Yoneda speaking at the funeral of Tom Mooney, May 8, 1942.*

Pearl Harbor had a swift impact on the Yonedas. Karl went to the wartime concentration camp for Americans of Japanese background that was hastily built at Manzanar in 1942. The military administration soon ordered that young Tom Culbert, as half Japanese, had to go as well. Elaine voluntarily joined Karl and Tom to keep the family together, despite the temporary obstructionism of government bureaucrats. This phase of the Yonedas' story introduces us to another little-known world, that of the factionalized Japanese community inside the camps. Karl, an outspoken opponent of Japanese militarism since the 1920s, soon became a leader of the pro-U.S. government, anti-fascist forces at Manzanar. Nights of tension and fear followed for the Yoneda family as members of the pro-Axis Manzanar Black



Dragon Association terrorized those adhering to the pro-government position. Eventually, Karl, like many Japanese-Americans, was released to serve with the U.S. Army as a combat soldier.

In the postwar period the Yonedas again committed themselves to left-wing causes, ranging from battles against discrimination to marches against war. During the 1960s, while Karl worked at the Port of San Francisco as a longshoreman, the Yonedas actively supported Cesar Chavez and the National Farm Workers Association as well as the student strike at San Francisco State University; fought for the repeal of the 1950 Emergency Detention (McCarran) Act, a relic of the McCarthy era that enabled the Attorney General to incarcerate people without trial; and began participating in the mass pilgrimages to Manzanar that ultimately resulted in the designation of the camp site as a state historic landmark. They are still involved in the Japanese-American community's effort to secure reparations for concentration camp victims of the 1940s and in other causes.

Karl Yoneda has written prolifically in Japanese about the history of Japanese workers and political activists in California and the West. This memoir, however, is his first book-length work in English. It is not a scholarly history of the Communist Party (although Yoneda plainly expresses his displeasure with the party's decision to suspend its Japanese-American members and to support their internment during World War II, his overall viewpoint is that of a party loyalist); instead, it is an activist's memoir, rich in drama and detail. *Ganbatte* should prove valuable to scholars of Asian-American history, labor relations, radicalism, and California history in general. The well-edited book is handsomely produced by the Asian American Studies Center at UCLA, with a striking cover photograph of Karl Yoneda taken by Dorothea Lange at Manzanar in 1942, several impressive illustrations, and a useful index. □

*Richard H. Kern,  
Expeditionary Artist in the  
Far Southwest, 1848–1853*

By David J. Weber (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press for the Amon Carter Museum, 1985, 355 pages.)

*Reviewed by* KD Kurutz, *Curator of Education at the Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, and author of Sacramento's Pioneer Patrons of Art: The Edwin Bryant Crocker Family (1985).*

One of the most intriguing devices utilized by authors and playwrights in fictional literature is the "story within a story" or the "play within a play." In some respects, David J. Weber has presented his non-fictional biography of Richard Kern in such a manner. First, he has had the challenge of drawing a profile of a relatively little-known expeditionary artist from beneath the shadows of his better-known brother, Edward, and of the expeditionary leaders for whom he worked, Frémont, Simpson, Sitgreaves and Gunnison. Second, in providing both context and perspective for his subject, Weber has dealt not only with Kern's field sketches and published lithographical images of the Far Southwest, but has showcased a small collection of finished watercolors and drawings from the Amon Carter Museum. The latter category is somewhat distinct from the former because, although these paintings are reworked from field sketches and are considered "finished" work, they were not intended for publication or exhibition. Further, Kern's intentions were more aesthetic than documentary with the latter group, a crucial distinction in evaluating his place in western art history.

In the case of this book, the term "biography" must be qualified. Although the years Kern spent in his birthplace, Philadelphia, are discussed to

some extent (the year of his birth is never mentioned), the years of his professional career, 1848–1853, are the focus of Weber's account. The author acknowledges this limitation: "Of his years spent in the West, we have only the records of his journeys through physical space. Kern kept diaries of his travels, but he left us few clues about his inner world or what he might have learned about himself while he was discovering the Southwest."

Kern's professional career as an expeditionary artist began when he accompanied Frémont's disastrous fourth expedition into southern Colorado. This privately-sponsored excursion, with experience of murder and starvation, did not deter Richard Kern from remaining in the West and further developing his skills as a documentary artist-explorer, topographer, and scientist. Weber's narrative surges over a path of journal entries, letters, and contemporary accounts and is enriched by the author's knowledge of the physical space with which Kern became identified. This knowledge not only enhances appreciation for the difficult conditions under which the artist worked but sheds indirect light into his inner world. Without this glimpse into Kern's inner world, the author's conclusions would remain hollow and smack of unabashed, and possibly, unwarranted praise. Although Weber does theorize and speculate when placing Kern in the context of his artistic contemporaries, this background information enhances the narrative and provides the non-art historian with additional keys to appreciating this fascinating subject.

In Weber's opinion, Kern was one of the most talented and prolific of the expeditionary artists of his time. He bases his case upon the fact that Kern was one of the first artists to view and record the people, places, flora, and fauna of the frontier areas of the Far Southwest. He also cites the fact that Kern's work was published in such well-circulated and respected sources as the U.S. Army *Topog-*

raphical Reports to document his claim that Kern's work had a significant impact in establishing the image of the area he charted on the minds of his contemporaries. Weber does not indicate upon whom this impact was made, and he neglects to point out that at this time in history West Point offered classes in the technical arts because of the Army's high regard for the power of the visual image. Often other members of the expeditionary parties, including the leaders, were also skilled documentary artists and topographers. Kern's artistic abilities and his place in art history then, have yet to be definitively evaluated.

Kern's life and career were cut short at the age of thirty-two. While accompanying John W. Gunnison's survey of the 38th parallel for a transcontinental railroad route, Kern, Gunnison and a small contingent of the larger party were killed during a surprise attack by Indians. Kern's sketches were completed and reworked by John Mix Stanley, the noted western illustrator. His legacy, then, is composed of surviving field sketches, some reworked as watercolors and detailed drawings, and lithographs drawn from his images. Kern admitted that he considered his brother Edward to be superior to him in topographical drawing and portraiture and his "equal in other departments of the arts." Some of Kern's works employ conventional compositional devices familiar to his contemporaries, but they do not convey the power, drama or verve of such artists as Karl Bodmer, Albert Bierstadt or Alfred Jacob Miller.

The works of two distinguished historians, William H. Goetzmann and Robert V. Hine, served as resources for Weber in preparing this book. In addition, Weber had access to a previously known but unstudied cache of Kern's work, the privately-held Cron collection. Goetzmann is more thorough and succinct than Weber in describing the accomplishments of expeditionary artists: "... the level of competence places these artists closer to the 'practitioner

artists' of the European tradition than to the masters of the nineteenth century." Hine's biography of Edward Kern, Richard's younger brother, presents a more objective analysis of the artists than does Weber: "However considerable their contributions to various fields of science . . . the Kerns were not first-rate artists." In contrast, Weber's book is an extended case for placing Kern in the context of his nineteenth-century artistic contemporaries. On the other hand, Weber has carefully selected Kern's own words to illuminate this narrative, revealing scientific regard for description and poetic sensitivity to his surroundings.

David J. Weber is a highly respected historian known for his writings on the Southwest. His story of Richard Kern is a significant contribution to scholarly appreciation of the role of the expeditionary artist of the mid-1800s and a compelling profile of one such person. The book itself is handsomely produced with 151 black and white illustrations and 16 color plates of the Amon Carter Museum's Kern collection. The book was released in conjunction with a traveling exhibition of these works, organized by the museum. It goes beyond the scope of an extended catalog essay or curatorial viewpoint to provide a well-researched account of a worthy subject. □

## *Golden Gate Metropolis: Perspectives on a Bay Area History.*

By Charles Wollenberg. (Berkeley, California: University of California, 1985.)

*Reviewed by Roger W. Lotchin, Professor of History, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Author of San Francisco, 1846-1856: From Hamlet to City; The Martial Metropolis: U.S. Cities in War and Peace; "The City and the Sword: San Francisco and the Rise of the Metropolitan-Military Com-*

*plex, 1919-1941"; and "The City and the Sword in Metropolitan California, 1919-1941."*

*Golden Gate Metropolis* is an interesting essay in urban regionalism. Since the book was written under the auspices of the Institute for Governmental Studies at the University of California, it is not surprising that regionalism is the centerpiece of the book. The role of the I.G.S. is especially appropriate because of its historic commitment to regional consciousness and because of its role as a collector of Bay Area historical materials. Although less well known by historians than its campus neighbor, the Bancroft Library, the I.G.S. Library has an impressive collection of historical materials, particularly those pertaining to the last fifty years.

Professor Charles Wollenberg has made good use of these materials to produce a solid book. Conceived originally as a television series, the book is spare and to the point in its language. And the point is quite often an attempt to combat what the author rightly considers the "trivialization" and romanticization of much Bay Area history. The result is a rather sober account of "everybody's favorite city" and its metropolitan district.

Yet it is largely a successful one. Not many single-volume histories of entire urban regions or even metropolitan studies of particular periods exist at all. This alone puts the book in a class of its own. Wollenberg's regional approach is especially effective when he is describing long-term neighborhood change, such as the migrations of the wealthy from Rincon Hill to Nob Hill to Pacific Heights to Sea Cliff or the equally interesting evolution of change south of Market or in West Oakland. The author's treatment of technological succession is an even stronger contribution. Transportation is very effectively handled and linked to urban spatial and economic change. The single-volume, regional emphasis allows the author to unfold the story of trains, transit, bridges, and



autos with great continuity and comprehensiveness. The same is true of Wollenberg's discussion of regional government schemes and of Silicon Valley, women, urban sprawl, and the Earthquake Era.

The book's perceptions are often equal to its comprehensive structure. For example, Wollenberg reminds us that the Bay Area public works of the early twentieth century were much more important than its "progressive" politics. He also successfully refutes the notion that San Francisco became a helpless, stalemated metropolis after 1932 by pointing to a long history of downtown dominance of that city that has led to such massive works as BART, the bridges, redevelopment, and "Manhattanization."

On the other hand, Wollenberg's discussion of the 1920s is inadequate, or rather almost nonexistent, and, despite the promise of better-than-average coverage of politics, the author's discussion of that subject is well below average. For example, Mayor "Sunny" Jim Rolph and Michael M. O'Shaughnessy, who originated, finished, or perfected bridges, tunnels, highways, waterworks and other instruments of regionalism, are hardly mentioned. Neither is the national urban context. In a book that stressed larger trends like war and national and international economics, one would hope for more on the broader national process of urbanization of which the Bay Area variety is a part. Still, these reservations do not mar the overall reputation of this excellent book. For anyone interested in Bay Area urban history, it will be an indispensable guide. □

### *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians.*

By Francis Paul Prucha. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984, 2 vols., 1302 pp., \$60.00.)



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### *The Aggressions of Civilization: Federal Indian Policy since the 1880s*

Edited by Sandra L. Cadwalader and Vine Deloria, Jr. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984, 258 pp., \$34.95.)

Reviewed by Terry P. Wilson, Coordinator, Native American Studies, and Chair, Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and author of *The Underground Reservation: Osage Oil*.

Francis Paul Prucha obviously intended *The Great Father* as a master synthesis of Indian-white relations, culminating a lifetime of research and incorporating material from a dozen-and-a-half books on the subject. He has fulfilled his intention, surveying the history of

Both Indians and government policy makers have faced tensions between cultural preservation and assimilation.

American Indian policy from the birth of the nation to the 1980s in a well written and comprehensive fashion. The Organization of American Historians has already measured the importance of the book by bestowing on it the prestigious Frederick Jackson Turner Award for significance in the field of western American history.

Apparently, despite his previous research and writing, Prucha had never fully appreciated the "fundamental unity and continuity in the government's policy" until planning and executing this latest history. He labels the persistent attitude exhibited by United States policy makers since the inception of the American nation paternalism, and defines the term as "a deter-

mination to do what was best for the Indians according to white norms." These latter included taking responsibility for the Indian's protection, subsistence, punishment when necessary, and ultimately guidance into the white man's civilization and Christianity. This process was described by Chief Justice John Marshall as the United States assuming the role of guardian for its Native American wards, a concept that led to the modern trust relationship between the federal government and the Indian tribes.

Prucha took his title from the Indians' common referral to the president of the United States as "the Great Father." While the term was little used after 1880 by rhetoric-making government officials, the paternalism that it implied continued and sometimes increased, as evidenced in the twentieth century with government supported Indian education, health, and economic development. While admitting "the oppressive aspects" of paternalism, Prucha emphasizes (as he has done consistently elsewhere) that its perpetrators believed their actions to constitute "a humane Christian approach" to the vexing problems of Indian-white relations.

No historian will likely quarrel with the general framework within which *The Great Father* was crafted. Nonetheless, upon examining Prucha's elaborations on his theme of paternalism some, including this reviewer, discover interpretations with which to argue. The major disagreement has to do with the author's willingness to accept the words and statements of government officials and the language of Congress and the courts at face value. This is not to suggest that Prucha is at all naive about politics or politicians; rather it appears that he does not fully acknowledge the possibility that sheer rationalization to camouflage simple self interest may have been the chief motivating factor in the forging of many Indian policy statements. This is a subtlety that primarily will concern scholars, who with students will mostly praise Prucha's achievement, especially

his decision to extend his coverage to 1980, thus recognizing the overemphasis on nineteenth century events in past histories.

In direct contrast to the tightly knit fabric of Prucha's two volumes, *The Aggressions of Civilization* offers nine individual threads of scholarship loosely tied by its editors into a skein describing and analyzing aspects of Indian policy since the 1880s. Sandra L. Cadwalader, executive director of the Indian Rights Association, provides the preface to this work discussing the complexity of Indian affairs as they have evolved since 1880, when many non-Indians confidently believed that Native Americans would disappear, "to be remembered only as symbols of a by-gone and primitive era." She gives as a reason for this collection the hope that understanding past policies and their underlying dynamics "should help us avoid similar failures in the future," a sentiment intimating the critical tone of the ensuing commentaries on United States policy.

Her co-editor, the well-known Sioux author Vine Deloria, Jr., leads the procession of articles with an appraisal of the Indian Rights Association. He also contributed a second piece, "Congress in its Wisdom: The Course of Indian Legislation." The chapter on the Association traces its inception as "the most prominent private presence in early Indian litigation" in 1882 to its altered role today as an influential institution, but no longer a dominating influence. Deloria attributes much of the Association's success to "its uncanny ability to attract devoted staff" who tended to stay with the organization, giving it "a corporate memory and experience." In his second article Deloria delineates the subject of Indians as a topic of congressional debate and action. In the main he finds Congress consistently trying to legislate away all traces of Indian culture, an assessment that is difficult to discern, he notes, when legislation is viewed chronologically and thus reflects the nation's shifts between liberal and conservative

views. This is a penetrating study pointing up the inconsistencies of federal Indian legislation and concluding that the rise of complex organizational structures has rendered Indian affairs so burdensome as to leave little incentive on the part of Congress to effect necessary adjustments.

Wilcomb E. Washburn provides a brief overview of "Indian policy since the 1880s," ending with the observation that "Indians and Indian tribes survive and grow in both numbers and power" despite problems along the way. Former associate commissioner of Indian Affairs James E. Officer contributes the book's longest chapter with a description of "The Indian Service and Its Evolution." Officer carefully balances his narrative to give equal attention to various aspects of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and affiliated offices of the federal apparatus involved with Indian affairs. His major contribution comes in the last half of his narrative when he draws on his own experience and contacts to discuss in a thoughtful manner the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, including the first part of the Reagan administration.

Two other parts of the book address general topics. Indian law specialists Robert T. Coulter and Steven M. Tullberg explore the painful history of "Indian Land Rights." Eschewing a casebook methodology, the two attorneys have composed a convincing brief indicting the United States legal system for providing "precious little protection against direct seizure of Indian land . . . or against rigid control of Indian resources by the Interior Department." Another attorney specializing in Indian law, Alvin J. Ziontz, analyzes "Indian Litigation." Using a variety of legal questions and federal cases, Ziontz outlines the evolution of law respecting Indian tribes emphasizing the principle of sovereignty.

The remaining three articles are more particularized in their subject matter. David M. Strausfeld utilizes primary research to discuss "Reformers in Conflict: The Pueblo Dance Controversy," a 1920s



confrontation between John Collier and the Indian Rights Association. In "The Indian Reorganization Act," historian Laurence M. Hauptman succinctly reassesses the 1934 Wheeler-Howard bill and generally finds it wanting in terms of constituting a real "new deal" for Indians. And finally, Ann Laquer Estlin in *"Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock: The Long Shadow"* details the background, litigation, and effects of a 1903 Supreme Court decision that established the plenary power of Congress to abrogate the terms of Indian treaties.

*The Aggressions of Civilization*, if reissued in paperback, would make an outstanding supplementary textbook for Indian history and Native American Studies courses. The University of Nebraska Press is already contemplating a shorter one-volume condensation of *The Great Father* for classroom use. Historians and history students cannot afford to ignore either of these fine additions to the historical literature about the American Indian. □

## The Wilder Shore.

By Morley Baer and David Rains Wallace. (San Francisco: The Sierra Club, 1984, 162 pp., \$50 cloth.)

Reviewed by Richard Dillon, author of *Iron Men: California's Industrial Pioneers*, Peter, James and Michael Donahue.

Bravo! Encore! The Sierra Club's award-winning Exhibit Format series of books is back after a ten-year hiatus. This handsome new folio weds the talents of photographer Baer and nature writer Wallace in what used to be called "a marriage made in heaven."

Baer's images are splendid, a combination of forty black and white photographs in the grand tradition of Ansel Adams and Edward Weston and thirty-five color pictures reminiscent of those of Eliot Porter. All of them are large

plates; none shares its page with text. (Hence the "exhibit format" term.) All are beautifully reproduced in either b/w duotone or the four-color process on heavily coated paper of the highest quality. Baer has chosen pictures from thirty-five years of diligent photographing of California scenes. He mixes his subject matter well, using not only seascapes and land vistas but also close-up shots to detail the state's flora and geology—Sierra mulleins, Redwood Coast maple leaves, Garrapata Beach's sculptured sandstone rocks—to allow us to share his delight in nature's forms. His selection of photographs beautifully exemplifies the main theme of the book, the remarkable, dramatic, diversity of California's landscape.

The book is a joint exploration by photographer and writer of a transect of California, a west-to-east examination of a slice of the state resembling the Oakland Museum's layout of its natural history displays. We are transported by our two guides from the pounding surf of Big Sur past lazy sloughs and quiet marshes to the Coast Range's shadowy redwoods and sunny vineyards. From there we make our way across the flat pastures and flooded rice fields of the Central Valley to the historic Mother Lode foothills, the High Sierra peaks, and the desert trapped in their rain-shadow.

Narrator Wallace stresses a second major theme in his text, the profound impression—no, impact—that California's land has made upon its inhabitants, especially its writers. He does so by mixing vignettes of personal experience, drawn from his 1971–83 hiking journals, with comments on writers from Richard Henry Dana to Joan Didion. His impressionistic personal observations are in the grand California literary tradition of John Muir, J. Smeaton Chase, Mary Austin and other masters of environmental belles lettres. His writing is often insightful and is sometimes eloquent without being ornate or "high falutin'."

Wallace deserves our thanks for effec-

tively refuting the belief (pure baloney) of Santayana that stereotypically deluded Californians have used their Arcadian landscape as a spontaneous and inarticulate substitute for religion. True, nature has had a powerful, almost religious, effect on many of us. But our literature is full of careful and articulate thinking about the "presence" of the land in our lives. Wallace discusses and quotes such coastal writers as Dana, Robert Louis Stevenson and Robinson Jeffers, and such Mother Lode authors as Bret Harte and, surprisingly, Ambrose Bierce. Joan Didion represents the San Joaquin Valley, John Muir the Sierra, Mary Austin the desert country. The selections are well chosen. (This is an easy matter with the likes of Steinbeck and Frank Norris, not such a cinch with an overrated Jack London.) Perhaps part of the credit goes to Wallace's mentor, of sorts, essayist and critic Lawrence Clark Powell.

David Rains Wallace proves that the best California nature writing is neither sentimental glorification nor primitivism but, often, a kind of visionary questing and an early questioning of the so-called "destiny" of civilization to tame (i.e., destroy) the natural landscape. He touches on sub-themes—California as the continent's edge, the quandary of the "end of the line" for westering Americans; also the ambiguity of some writers facing the grandeur and wildness of mountains and desert. The resulting ambivalence is not a love/hate relationship, but a curiously exhilarating love/fear feeling.

The volume, nicely indexed, is of excellent design, a co-production of the Yolla Bolly Press in Round Valley's Covelo and San Francisco's Sierra Club. There are a few careless references in Wallace's text (redwoods in the Mother Lode, Drake in Tomales or San Francisco or Half Moon [!] Bay, but the only real fault of the volume is the fact that Wallace Stegner's foreword is disappointingly brief, really only token "Stegneriana." All in all, a highly recommended book. □

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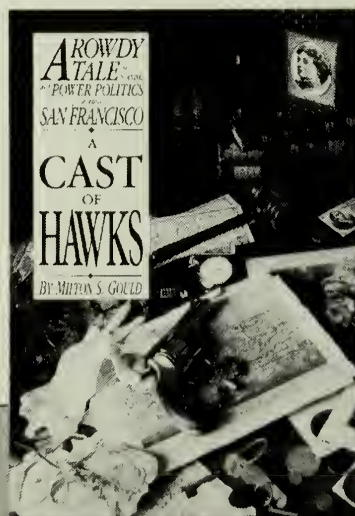
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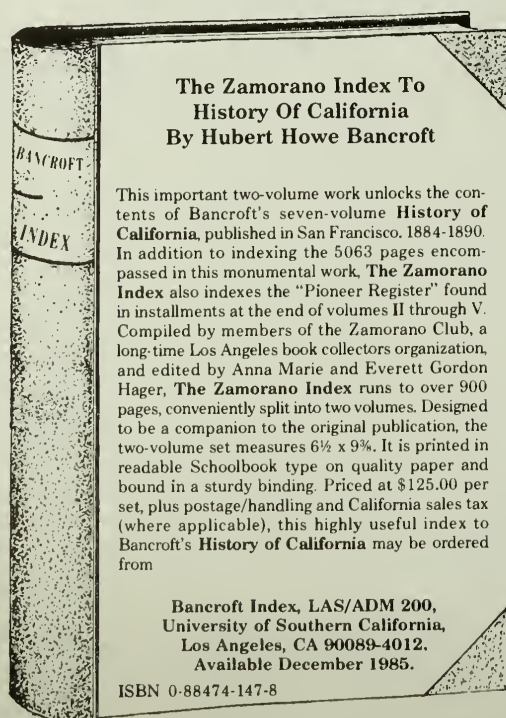
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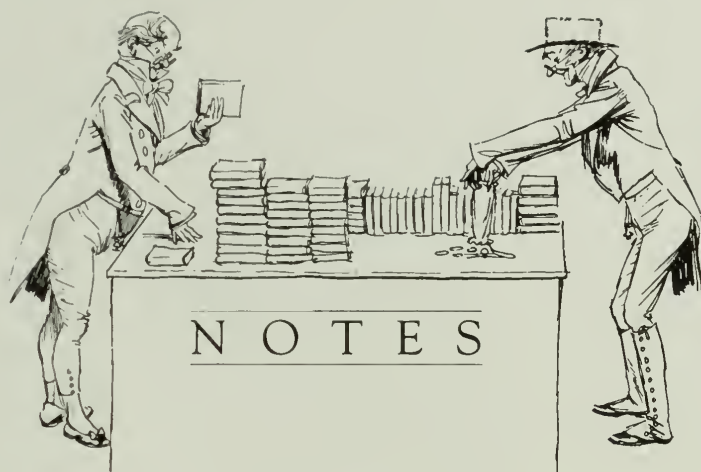
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14. Letter from Mrs. L.H. Gibbs, March 22, 1983; *Stockton Record*, February 9, 1964.
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26. Clair Engle to Elmer E. Robinson, July 1, 1954, *Engle Collection*.
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43. *San Francisco Examiner*, August 26, 1955, September 9, 1955, September 13, 1955, and September 24, 1955.
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The primary materials for this article, which was adapted from commentary written for an exhibit at the deSaisset Museum in Santa Clara, are the photographs. The lives and work of Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, and the Farm Security Administration have been documented elsewhere and the following notes are intended to guide readers seeking more information. In addition to the works specifically cited here, readers may wish to consult Penelope Dixon, *Photography of the Farm Security Administration: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1983) and Roy Emerson Stryker and Nancy Wood, *In This Proud Land: America 1935–1943 as Seen in the FSA Photographs* (New York: Galahad Books, 1973).

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6. *Ibid.*, pp. 15–19.
7. See, Matthew Baigell, *The American Scene: American Painting of the 1930s* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974).
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5. Deposition of George Stanton, May 9, 1863. Manuscript in the Collection of the Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco.
6. *San Francisco Bulletin*, November 13, 1924.
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8. Quoted in *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 1, 1950.
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10. Frederick Law Olmstead et al. *Preliminary Report In Regard to a Plan of Public Pleasure Grounds for the City of San Francisco*. (New York: Olmstead, Vaux, and Company, 1866), p. 22.
11. Judd Kahn, *Imperial San Francisco: Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897–1906*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), pp. 1–3 *passim*, and Daniel H. Burnham, *Report on a Plan for San Francisco . . .* (San Francisco: Sunset Press, 1905), p. 146.
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3. See Winifred B. Bonfils, *The Life and Personality of Phoebe Apperson Hearst* (San Francisco: John Henry Nash, 1928). In addition to this published account, portions of an unpublished biography with related notes written by Adele S. Brooks are available in Phoebe Apperson Hearst, "Correspondence and Papers," in Carton 5, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter cited as PAH).
4. W.A. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst: A Biography of William Randolph Hearst* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), p. 322.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 321.
6. Older, *William Randolph Hearst*, p. 6; George Hearst, *The Way It Was: Recol-*

*lections of U.S. Senator George Hearst, 1820-1891* (San Francisco: The Hearst Corporation, 1972), pp. 5-18; Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, pp. 4-6. The latter incorrectly gives the Hearsts' marriage place as Stedman, Missouri. Edward T. James, et al, eds., *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), II, p. 171. The Hearst biographical essay was written by Rodman W. Paul.

7. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, pp. 7-15.
8. Older, *William Randolph Hearst*, p. 29. A former editor of the *San Francisco Bulletin*, Fremont Older edited Hearst's *San Francisco Call* in the 1920s. After Hearst purchased the *Bulletin* in 1929, Older edited the merged *Call-Bulletin* until his death in 1935.
9. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, pp. 9-13; *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919. George Hearst's mining career is examined in Fremont and Cora Older, *George Hearst: California Pioneer*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1966); Hearst, *The Way It Was*; Alonzo Phelps, *Contemporary Biography of California's Representative Men* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Co., 1881), II, pp. 9-13; *Pacific Coast Annual Mining Review*, 1888 (San Francisco, 1889), p. 25; William Randolph Hearst, Jr., "Grandpa Hearst Strikes It Rich," *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle*, August 28, 1966; and George Hearst, "Papers," Bancroft Library. Filed with PAH, this collection consists of four boxes and one carton, primarily letters written to Hearst by business friends and mining associates. His financial support of Phoebe's travels and other interests is reflected by this statement: "Spend as much money as is necessary for your pleasure and not think of it. For if you are to feel that you are doing wrong you lose all your pleasure . . . So do not write me that you are feeling bad about what it costs. You will get all you want for your pleasure and comfort and it only makes me happy [sic] for you to have the money to use in that way." See letter, George to Phoebe Hearst, July 17 (year not dated), Incoming Correspondence, PAH.
10. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, pp. 22-23, 29-37.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 33. For evidence that

- Mrs. Hearst helped various students to pursue their education, see letters to her from John Bakewell, Edward H. Bennett, Putnam Griswold, Elmer B. Harris, Newell L. Perry, and Jeanette Shafer, Incoming Correspondence, PAH. These letters were written between 1898 and 1915 by students of architecture, music, and drama who were often studying in Europe.
12. See Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 1980), pp. 6-7, 13-14, 21-22, 98; and *San Francisco Examiner*, April 15, 1919. Also see letters requesting financial aid or expressing gratitude, Sarah Cooper to Phoebe Hearst, July 23, 1888, August 12, 1889, December 16, 1892, and March 2, 1893, Incoming Correspondence, PAH. In 1887, Cooper named a kindergarten in honor of Mrs. Hearst. This common practice was designed to raise money from primary donors. See Roland dissertation, p. 98.
  13. Hearst, *The Way It Was*, p. 26; Winfield J. Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California, 1849-1892* (Sacramento: California State Library, 1893), p. 436. Hearst served from March 23 until August 4, 1886. A special session of the then Republican controlled legislature replaced him with a party member, Abram P. Williams, who completed the remaining seven months of Miller's term. Older, *George Hearst*, pp. 195-196; R. Hal Williams, *The Democratic Party and California Politics, 1880-1896* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1973), p. 102, note 52.
  14. On January 19, 1887, the *New York Times* charged that "Hearst's Senatorial seat . . . cost him a cool half a million" and that Chris Buckley, the blind Democratic boss of San Francisco, had delivered the votes necessary to the election. For information on Hearst's senatorial aspirations and alliance with Buckley, see Williams, *The Democratic Party and California Politics, 1880-1896*, pp. 25, 65-66, 105-107, 148-149; and William A. Bullough, *The Blind Boss and His City: Christopher Augustine Buckley and Nineteenth-Century San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 160, 175-176, 183-184.
  15. The *Washington Post*, April 14, 1919, mentioned Phoebe's prominent role at social affairs in the nation's capital. For a brief reference to his wife, see Hearst, *The Way It Was*, pp. 18, 38.
  16. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, pp. 52-53, 61-62. The *New York Times*, April 14, 1919, estimated the value of Hearst's estate at between fifteen million and twenty million dollars, principally in mines, stock, and ranches. An interesting provision of his will stipulated that one-half of the estate should revert to William Randolph Hearst in the event that Phoebe married again. For whatever reason, she never remarried. Hearst was not known for vigorous leadership in the U.S. Senate. He seldom spoke in debate and claimed to be "the silent man of the Senate." See the *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, p. 488; and *Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of George Hearst*, delivered in the Senate and House of Representatives, March 25, 1892, and February 24, 1894 (Washington, D.C., 1894), pp. 38-39. For evidence that Hearst did not neglect issues of importance to California and its governor, Robert Waterman, see letters, Hearst to Waterman, February 1 and 5, 1890, "Waterman Papers," Bancroft Library.
  17. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 16, 1919; *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, p. 488; *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, XXV, p. 322; Elizabeth D. Ross, *The Kindergarten Crusade: The Establishment of Preschool Education in the United States* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 25, 88; Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 181; and Older, *George Hearst*, p. 210.
  18. Older, *George Hearst*, p. 166; and letters, Richard Smith to Phoebe Hearst, November 1, 1895, Elizabeth L. Thornson to Phoebe Hearst, June 1, 1904, Anaconda file, Incoming Correspondence, PAH.
  19. Joseph H. Cash, *Working the Homestead* (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1973), pp. 72-73; and Ross, *The Kindergarten Crusade*, p. 25. Carton 9, PAH, also contains information on the Hearst Free Library and Kindergarten in Lead, South Dakota.
  20. A complete report on the value of her individual benefactions to the university can be found in "A Gracious Lady Helped the Young," *Oakland Tribune*, April 27, 1969. Also see the *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, pp. 488-489; *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919; Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 272; Verne A. Stadtman, *The University of California, 1868-1968* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), pp. 86, 119-120, 137, 160, 177, 191; and the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, September 26, 1976. For a recent concise overview of Maybeck's career, see Georgia Sommers Wright, "Architect's Mind in Flux: Maybeck's Beaux-Arts Triumphs, Trials & Evolution at Mills College," *The Californians*, II (July/August 1984), pp. 31-38.
  21. For her role in the development of the Department of Anthropology and university archaeological expeditions, see Timothy H.H. Thoresen, "Paying the Piper and Calling the Tune: The Beginnings of Academic Anthropology in California," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, XI (July 1975), pp. 257-275; and *Notable American Women, 1606-1950*, II, p. 172.
  22. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919; *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, XXV, p. 322; and Older, *William Randolph Hearst*, p. 529. Also, regarding the architectural plan for the University of California, see letters, Bernard Maybeck to Phoebe Hearst, 1896-1899, Incoming Correspondence, PAH.
  23. Regarding Mrs. Hearst's donations to the Lick Observatory, see letters, William W. Campbell to Phoebe Hearst, 1902-1918, Incoming Correspondence, PAH. Additional information on Mrs. Hearst's many gifts and visits to the Observatory can be found in letters to her from Edward S. Holden, J.W. Schaeberle, James E. Keeler, and C.D. Perrine, 1892-1907, Lick Observatory file, Incoming Correspondence, PAH.
  24. Older, *William Randolph Hearst*, pp. 253, 492-493; and *Notable American Women, 1607-1950*, II, p. 172.
  25. Quoted in Older, *William Randolph Hearst*, p. 492.
  26. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919; *Oakland Tribune*, April 27, 1969. Also see letters written by Hearst Domestic Industries students, 1 folder, Carton 1 and letters, Amanda



- Hicks (director) to Phoebe Hearst, 1900-1905, Hearst Domestic Industries file, Incoming Correspondence, PAH. According to the *New York Times*, May 28, 1904, Mrs. Hearst withdrew her financial support from this organization and several University of California student clubs in 1904.
27. Quoted in Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 253. For a glimpse into life at the Pleasanton ranch from the boyhood perspective of Mrs. Hearst's grandson, see William Randolph Hearst, Jr., "Grandmother," *National Parent-Teacher*, XLVI (February 1952), pp. 14-17.
  28. Margaret Calder Hayes, "A Weekend in the Country," *California Monthly*, LXXXI (October 1980), 25, published by the California Alumni Association, University of California, Berkeley.
  29. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 15, 1919.
  30. Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement," p. 97, note 20 on p. 122.
  31. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919. Regarding the architectural plan for Mills College, see letter, Bernard Maybeck to Phoebe Hearst, October 22, 1917, Incoming Correspondence, PAH. For information on the California Congress of Mothers, see Carton 8, PAH. Alice Birney served as the first president of the National Congress of Mothers until 1902. Under her leadership state branches were organized to promote cooperation between parents and teachers. See letters, 1896-1912, from members and officers of the Congress and about the Congress, National Congress of Mothers file, Incoming Correspondence, PAH.
  32. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919; *New York Times*, April 18, 1919; and *Oakland Tribune*, April 27, 1969. Mrs. Hearst's estate was appraised at \$11,012,850. According to the California State Controller, the state would thus collect an inheritance tax of \$1,056,845, of which her son as principal heir would be required to pay \$949,101. See the *New York Times*, August 26, 1923.
  33. Quoted in the *Oakland Tribune*, April 27, 1969.
  34. In addition to kindergartens, the "charities explosion" included the establishment of such institutions as the Children's Hospital, the Women's Hospital, the YMCA, the Infant Shelter, the Girl's Union, and the Ladies Relief Society. See Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement," pp. 13-14, 53-56, 129-171.
  35. Thomas C. Cochran, *Business in American Life: A History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), pp. 237-238.
  36. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 14, 1919.
  37. William R. Hearst, Jr., "Grandmother," p. 17.
  38. Thoresen, "Paying the Piper and Calling the Tune," p. 273.
- Shimkin, Golden Horn to Golden Gate, pp. 290-294.**
1. The account of the flight of the Siberian Flotilla and background material are derived primarily from Ya. K. Stark, "Otchet o dieltalnosti Sibirskoi o period 1921-22" (ten parts) in *Morskiye Zapiski*, 10-14 (1952-56). Hereafter cited as Stark.
  - Alexander I. Sofronoff, who survived the flight as a sailor, contributed a detailed account in personal interviews. Additional and corroborative materials were provided by V.V. Fedoulenko, as interviewed by Boris Raymond, 1967 ("Russian emigré life in Shanghai," typescript in Regional Oral History Office, University of California Bancroft Library, Berkeley), and V.S. Charnetsky of San Francisco.
  - John B. Ewald, "The last of the Navy of the Czar," *Outlook*, 145: 20-22, Jan 5, 1927 and *Literary Digest*, Jan 22, 1927, is an account from the Philippines.
  - The *New York Times Index* for 1922 and 1923 records items regarding the flight of the flotilla under Russia, refugees. The *San Francisco Examiner* for July 22, 1923, reports the flight and its arrival in San Francisco.
  - Specific numbers of people and ships and similar details vary somewhat in the different accounts of the flight. The passenger list of the S.S. *Merritt* was obtained from the National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.
  2. The background history of the Russian revolution in Siberia is provided by William S. Graves, *American Siberian Adventure, 1918-1920* (New York: Peter Smith, 1931); George Stewart, *The White Armies of Russia* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1933); and Canfield F. Smith, *Vladivostok Under Red and White Rule. Revolution and Counterrevolution in the Russian Far East 1920-1922*. (Seattle: Univ of Washington Press, 1975).
  3. Stark, 11:14.
  4. Stark, 10:23.
  5. Stark, 11:7.
  6. Smith.
  7. Stark, 12:16.
  8. Stark, 14:59.
  9. Personal communication from Alexander Sofronoff.
  10. Stark, 14:61.
  11. Ibid.
  12. Stark, 14:65.
  13. Stark, 14:66.
  14. Ibid.
  15. Personal communication from Alexander Sofronoff.
  16. Fedoulenko, Ewald.
  17. Ibid.
  18. Ewald, *Outlook*, p. 20.
  19. Stark, 14:70.
  20. Interview with Sofronoff; also Fedoulenko and Ewald.
  21. Ewald.
  22. Arrangements to admit the refugees to the United States are recorded in communications between the War and State departments, especially John W. Weeks, Secretary of War to State, December 11, 1922; Charles Evans Hughes, Secretary of State, to Weeks, December 18, 1922; and D.C. Poole, Division of Russian Affairs, Department of State, to Harrison at State, February 17, 1923.
  23. Fedoulenko.
  24. *New York Times*, February 2, March 26, 1923.
  25. Ewald.
  26. Interviews with Charnetsky; Fedoulenko.
  27. *New York Times*, May 27, 1923.
  28. Interviews with Sofronoff and Charnetsky; also Fedoulenko.
  29. Passenger list, S.S. *Merritt*.
  30. *New York Times*, May 29 and 30, 1923.
  31. *New York Times*, August 14, 1923.
  32. *New York Times*, July 3, 1923.
  33. Personal communication from Alexander Sofronoff.
  34. Michael W. Tripp, "Russian Routes: Origins and Development of an Ethnic Community in San Francisco," unpublished dissertation, San Francisco State University, 1980.

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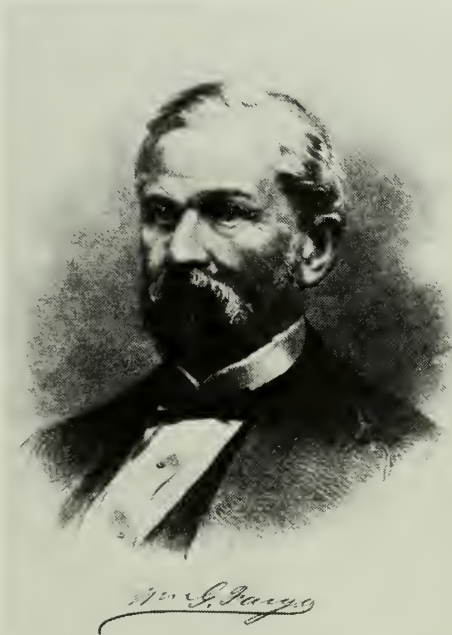
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